

GMR

GET MORE FROM YOUR GAMES

\$4.99 US \$6.99 CANADA NOVEMBER 2004



GMR.UP.COM

PAGE 106 // NINJA // REVIEWS

PAPER MARIO THE THOUSAND-YEAR DOOR EXCLUSIVE FIRST REVIEW

CHECK IT OUT!
EB SPECIAL
OFFERS INSIDE.
UP TO \$200
IN SAVINGS!

PAGE 86 // FEATURE // HALO 2

HALO 2 EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW



THE FASTEST GROWING MMO GAME IN THE COUNTRY
JUST EXPANDED INTO SPACE.



The logo features the words "STAR WARS GALAXIES" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, with a glowing blue planet and a white orbital ring behind the text. Below this, the words "JUMP TO LIGHTSPEED" are written in a similar bold, white font. The background is a dark space filled with white stars and two X-wing starfighters flying in the distance.

Hundreds of thousands of **Star Wars** fans have immersed themselves in the epic struggle for the Galactic Empire in the highly successful massively multiplayer online game, **Star Wars Galaxies: An Empire Divided**. Now, **An Empire Divided** expands into space with the release of its first expansion, **Star Wars Galaxies: Jump To Lightspeed**. Experience a whole new level of action-oriented gameplay and content that lets you jump into the cockpit of classic **Star Wars** starships and join the fight for the Galactic Empire.

- 10 new and distinct space sectors to explore.
- Over 15 classic starships from the **Star Wars** universe.
- Build and customize your own starships.
- More than 100 new, story-oriented space missions.
- 4 new space professions, including Shipwright and Privateer.
- 2 new playable and completely customizable species.


www.swjumptolightspeed.com



Star Wars Galaxies: An Empire Divided is required to play Jump To Lightspeed.

LucasArts and the LucasArts logo are registered trademarks of Lucasfilm Ltd. Star Wars Galaxies is a registered trademark of Lucasfilm Entertainment Company Ltd. SOE and the SOE logo are registered trademarks of Sony Online Entertainment Inc. © 2004, 2005 Lucasfilm Entertainment Company Ltd or Lucas Ltd. & ® or TM as indicated. All rights reserved.






ALRIGHT, FELLAS, LET'S GET
DOWN TO BUSINESS. HIT THE
LIGHTS, MURRAY.



CHECK.



SO WE STILL NEED ONE
MORE MEMBER TO PULL OFF
OUR BIGGEST JOB YET.
WE NEED A FAST LEARNER...



EVERYONE
E
Comic
Violence



ESRB

SOMEONE
FEARLESS...



WITH QUICK REFLEXES.

WHO CAN THINK
ON THEIR FEET...



AND SOMEONE WITH A
PLAYSTATION 2.

COME ON.
ARE YOU WITH US?

Sly 2
BAND OF THIEVES



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

PlayStation 2

VENGEANCE REIGNS FROM ABOVE.



www.tribesvengeance.com

Coming October 2004

TEEN
T Blood
 Mild Language
 Violence
 ESRB CONTENT RATING www.esrb.org

PC
 CD-ROM
 SOFTWARE

ATI

POWERED BY
 game spy

irrational
 Games

VIVENDI
 UNIVERSAL
 GAMES

© 2004 Vivendi Universal Games. All rights reserved. Tribes: Vengeance is a trademark of Irrational Games. The Tribes brand and logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games.



Soar into Battle —
Jetpack, ski and pilot your way through the most savage battles on land and in the air.



Extreme Multiplayer Action —
An online tactical warfare experience for up to 32 players that features challenging new battle games and all-new team strategies.



All-New Weapons and Vehicles —
Blast the opposition with devastating new weapons like the Rocket Pod and new vehicles like the powerful Assault Tank.

Tribes™ is back with a vengeance. The ultimate high-flying, multiplayer FPS battle experience returns with deadly new weapons, faster and more versatile flight, in-depth strategic team action, and the first-ever *Tribes* single-player campaign.

TRIBES

VENGEANCE

Destruction. Chaos. Retribution.

This battle doesn't
call for a hero.

It calls
for a savior.

©2010 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Halo, Halo Live, Xbox Live, Xbox Live Live, and the Halo Live logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. The Halo Live logo is a trademark of the Halo Live logo.




Blood and Gore
Violence
Language

halo2.com



HALO

On November 9th
Earth Will Never Be The Same



FOR THOSE WHO LIVE
TO LEARN NEW GAMES

EBGAMES™
electronics boutique®

www.ebgames.com



CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR

PS2	.....	\$49.99
XBOX	.....	\$49.99
GAMECUBE	.....	\$49.99
CANADIAN	.....	\$59.99 (GST)

While supplies last. Figure received with game pick-up. Cannot be combined with any other offer or promotion. See sales associate for complete details. Game in store 11/17/04. Offer valid 09/25/04 - 11/15/04.

PRE-ORDER CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR FOR PLAYSTATION 2, XBOX, OR GAMECUBE, AND GET AN AMERICAN G.I. FIGURE...

FREE!



CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR

PS2	.....	\$39.99
XBOX	.....	\$39.99
GAMECUBE	.....	\$39.99
PC	.....	\$39.99
CANADIAN PS2, XBOX, GAMECUBE	.....	\$54.99 (GST)
CANADIAN PC	.....	\$49.99

While supplies last. Art book included with game pick-up. Cannot be combined with any other offer or promotion. See sales associate for complete details. Game in store 11/17/04. Offer valid 09/25/04 - 11/15/04.

PRE-ORDER PRINCE OF PERSIA 2: WARRIOR WITHIN FOR PC, XBOX, PLAYSTATION 2, OR GAMECUBE AND GET A BONUS ART BOOK...

FREE!



FOR A STORE NEAR YOU CALL: 1-800-800-5166 • OR SHOP ONLINE AT EBGAMES.COM

EBGAMES
Electronic Boutique

We take games seriously™

GMR

GET MORE FROM YOUR GAMES

CONTENTS ISSUE 22

086 (ALMOST) EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HALO 2

→ Every Halo 2 tidbit revealed thus far in one handy article

102 INTERVIEW: ATSUSHI INABA

→ Clover Studio's head honcho talks *Viewtiful Joe*

MORE

TIPS, CODES, REWARDS

SLY 2: BAND OF THIEVES 147

→ Steal your way to victory!

AI 152

→ Your key to hidden treasures in that pile of games you have

CONNECT 156

→ Over 3 mods, plus a *Monsieur Hunter* quest with a GMR prize

HIGH SCORE 158

→ Allen Hornsied and friends visit GMR

FRONT

GMR NEWS NETWORK

027 FINAL FANTASY VII: ADVENT CHILDREN

→ GMR hits Italy to see the film you're all waiting for

030 ARRIVAL/SOJOURNMENTS

→ What to buy/what to save for

032 TALENT: MAMORU OSHI

→ Oshi in the Shell's director gets philosophical

036 THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ACCLAIM

→ As Acclaim seeks Chapter 7, we examine its history

040 INTERNATIONAL REPORT

→ Allen Syndrome, because you can't have too many aliens

NEXT

IGNITING GAMES

049 KILLZONE

050 TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2

052 GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

054 DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI 3

056 VIEWTIFUL JOE 2

060 CLOSE COMBAT: FIRST TO FIGHT

062 WARHAMMER 40,000: DAWN OF WAR

066 KUON

066 FATAL FRAME 2: DIRECTOR'S CUT

068 MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: CLUB EDITION

072 ALIEN HOMOINO

074 NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

078 THE URBZ: SIMS IN THE CITY

080 TAIKO DRUM MASTER

081 BLOOD WILL TELL

REGULARS

THE GIFTS THAT KEEP ON GIVING

PEOPLE 016

→ We are family

POST 018

→ Your letters: We laughed, we cried, we rpled

ESRB

ESRB RATED MATURE
CONTENT RATED BY THE
ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE
RATING BOARD

GMR (ISSN 1544-0712) is published monthly by Ziff Davis Media, Inc., 200 Z Drive SE, New York, NY 10014. Periodicals Postage Paid at New York, NY 10016 and additional mailing offices. Single issue sales \$4.99. The cover price (US) listed on this page is \$4.99 in the U.S. and \$5.99 outside the U.S. Checks made payable to GMR (ISSN 1544-0712). Send address changes to GMR, P.O. Box 10473, Boulder, CO 80522-0473. For subscription rates, please contact us at GMR@ziff.com or by website phone contact at 1-800-762-2862 (toll-free) in the U.S. and Canada (011 313-3296-0206) elsewhere. Postmaster: Please send address changes to GMR, P.O. Box 10473, Boulder, CO 80522-0473. This publication is published for permission to reuse material from this publication or our website by email rights, text, graphics, content, Ziff Davis Media's logo and Periodicals Postage at permissions@ziff.com or Ziff Davis Media, Inc., 200 Z Drive SE, New York, NY 10016. For 2008-2009, first-class postage, first-class postage, postage paid at New York, NY 10016. Postmaster: Please send address changes to GMR, P.O. Box 10473, Boulder, CO 80522-0473. Canadian GST Registration No. R1230722. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to PO Box 500, 890 Mount Pleasant, Etobicoke, ON M9W 4L6.

NOW

REVIEWS YOU CAN TRUST

PAPER MARIO: THE THOUSAND-YEAR ODOR	105
UNDER THE SKIN	108
TIME CRISIS: CRISIS ZONE	108
KATAMARI DAMACY	110
ARMORED CORE: NEXUS	112
ROBOTECH: INVASION	112
SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI: NOCTURNE	114
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005	116
GUNGRAVE OVERDOSE	116
KIRBY & THE AMAZING MIRROR	118
DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION EXTREME	118
STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT	120
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 2	121
CONFLICT: VIETNAM	121
DEF JAM FIGHT FOR NY	122
TERMINATOR 3: THE REDEMPTION	124
HEADHUNTER: REDEMPTION	124
OTOGI 2	125
SHADOW HEARTS: COVENANT	126
MEGA MAN ZERO 3	127
MEGA MAX X: COMMAND MISSION	127
SLY 2: BAND OF THIEVES	128
DONKEY KONGA	130
MARIO PINBALL LAND	130
GUILTY GEAR ISUKA	132
ADVANCE GUARDIAN HEROES	134
POKÉMON FIRERED & LEAFGREEN	134
CHOROQ	136
SECOND SIGHT	136
MONSTER HUNTER	138
EVIL GENIUS	140
SOUND/ADVICE: KENWOOD HTB-SY100V	143



WHAT UP WITH 1UP?

It's another whole month before the next GMR hits newsstands. Who can wait? Head to 1UP.COM for daily updates.

THIS MONTH ON GMR.1UP.COM

Paper Mario? We love this game so much that we not only put it on the cover, but also grilled developer Intelligent Systems and Nintendo of America Localization about it. Head to GMR.1UP.COM for the interview.

BLOG MADNESS

Learn the secret inner workings of the GMR staff. Read their 1UP.com blogs!



GMR_SKIP.1UP.COM

Skip is GMR's most frequent blogger, so keep checking back.



CARRIES.1UP.COM

When she's not carrying on about America's Next Top Model, Carrie might just be blogging.

CLUBBING



CLUBS.1UP.COM

This month's featured club is the GMR Fan Club, where discussions of this very mag are happening THIS VERY MINUTE. Head to <http://gmrclubclub-club.1UP.COM> to join in. You can also start your own club. Just click clubs.1UP.COM, and set it up. You get your own URL, a club journal, and a place to post images.

ALL A BOARD

BOARDS.1UP.COM

Visit <http://boards.1UP.COM>, and you can join the craziness at GMR's "Nuclear War on the Dance Floor" official board. Rent and rave to your heart's delight or just stop by and read what everyone else is buzzing about. It's OK to lurk.



**KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN
AND YOUR FEET DOWN.**

PRODUCTS & MORE FROM
AT&T INTERACTIVE BUSINESS

RP-E

CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Go Anywhere. So anywhere fast. Go anywhere fast looking like a damn pimp. NeedForSpeed.com



actual game screen



Challenge Everything™

GMR

GET MORE FROM YOUR GAMES

GAME GLUT

➔ Odds alright! There's something close to 400 games floating all console, handheld, and PC released hitting store shelves in the first four months of the year. Four hundred.

That's an average of 100 games per month [hey, who's a mathematician!]. Quick now, how many can you name? Did you say Halo 2, GTA: San Andreas, Half-Life 2, Gran Turismo 4, and Metal Gear Solid 3? Good. That's five. THUGZ, GoldenEye 2, Need for Speed Underground 2? That's eight. You're already at the two-percent mark.

Did you also name Paper, Mail of America (you can), and There So Raven? Ah, didn't think so. Why would you? For every awesome title coming this fall, there must be at least 10 not-so-awesomes. There's also a long list of games you may not even try because you're too busy playing the ones that got all the hype.

I'm talking about games like Paper Mario: The Thousand-Year Door, this issue's cover story and a definite game-of-the-year contender, and Prince of Persia: Warrior Within, certain to be even better than last year's superb Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time.

It's amazing that after all these years, the gaming industry is still shoveling a lot of



shovel. The good news is that it's also finally using the shovel on really awesome you-know-what. **✉**
Tom Byron, EC



WE ARE FAMILY

In observance of Family History Awareness Month, GMR shares the story of its old family with its new one. (That's you!)

JAMES MIELKE - EXECUTIVE EDITOR



2002-present: Executive editor of GMR
1997-2002: Captain of the H.M.S. Season/Pass
1996: Brief stint as cohost on The Magic Hour with Magic Johnson
1994-1998: King of Trinidad
1993-1994: King of Tobago
1980-1993: RECORDS DELETED
1977-1980: Disco king of Fargo, ND

CARRIE SHEPHERD - MANAGING EDITOR



Contrary to popular belief, members of the Shepherd family were not stewards of sheep, but rather horrible brats with the head of a pit bull, body of a crocodile, and the irresistible charm of the Madagascan hissing cockroach. Carrie honors her family name on a monthly basis by beating her "flock" to within an inch of their lives.

ANDREW PFISTER - ASSOCIATE EDITOR



The tragic legacy of the Pfister clan is one shrouded with blood and senseless violence. A bitter, long-standing feud with the rival Varantini family divided the city along sociopolitical lines and resulted in the brutal deaths of hundreds on both sides until 2003, when brother Adam finally returned the casserole dish.

CHRISTIAN NUTT - ASSOCIATE EDITOR



Reared by loving parents Lug and Macdania, Christian continues the bloodline that merged with the affluent Planters family back in 1886.

...What, we still can't make the Nutt jokes? Come on, it's been like six months already! It's comedy gold!

GERRY SERRANO - ART DIRECTOR



Found on the doorstep of the soon-to-be President William Howard Taft in 1907, Gerry was soon traded to the minor-league Minneapolis Millers for a utility infielder and 200 pounds of trout. The trout went on to become secretary of war, while Gerry played two solid seasons at fifth base before being put on waivers.

CARDLINE KING - DESIGNER



Records of the King family only date back as far as 1947, when an apparent vacation in the New Mexico desert is cryptically described as "going according to plan." Since then, members of the King family have enjoyed tremendous success as celebrities, human biologists, and high-ranking government officials.

GMR

Tom Byron, Editor-in-Chief
James Mielke, Executive Editor
Carrie Shepherd, Managing Editor
Andrew Pfister, Associate Editor
Christian Nutt, Associate Editor
Gerry Serrano, Art Director
Cardline King, Designer

Contributors

Jason Allen, Shane Bettenhausen, David Chen, Robert Coffey, John Davison, Kevin Gilford, Darren Gladstone, Jeff Green, Matthew Hawkins, Michael Jennings, Dana Jewersdorf, Justin Leeper, Di Luo, Mark MacDonald, Nick Marapas, Thierry Nguyen, Greg Orlando, Jeremy Parson, Mike Repasz, Ryan Scott, Dave Smith, Doug Truman

Codes and strategies produced in association with



Copy Desk
Copy Chief: Tom Edwards
Copy Editors: Greg Ford, Susie Ooba, Marizza Reberzo

Production
Senior Production Manager: Anne Marie Maguire
Production Manager: Monica Brand
Assistant Production Manager: Teresa Newson

DJ Dave Game Group
Senior Vice President: Dale Strong
Editorial Director: John Davison
Creative Director: Simon Cox
Business Director: Bill Danner

ILP/CCM

VP/General Manager: Tom Jessiman
Internet Sales Account Manager: Bill Young
Editor-in-Chief: Sam Kennedy

Sales

Group Publisher: Lee Urso
Associate Group Publisher: Stan Tragen
Advertising Director: Marc Varnaghi

Dairying Accounts

Bay Area
By Ann Penroza
Mary Gray, Regional Sales Manager
Amy Mishra, Account Executive

Northwest

North Bay to Oregon, AR, CO, IA, IL, IN, LA, MN, MD, MT, ND, NE, NM, NV, OR, OK, SC, TX, UT, WA, WI, WY, Northwest Canada

Aaron Gollion, District Sales Representative
Rita Kline, Account Executive

Southwest

Southern California and Arizona
Julie Steelman, Regional Sales Manager

East

AL, CT, DE, FL, GA, IN, KY, MA, ME, MI, MS, NC, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, SC, TN, VA, VT, WV, Western Canada
In Sinclair, Regional Sales Manager
Rita Kline, Account Executive

Consumer Accounts

Consumer West
Marc Callison, Consumer Accounts Manager
Candice Draz, Account Executive
Consumer East
Matthew E. Parkin, Regional Sales Manager
Candice Draz, Account Executive
Consumer Detroit
Ken Stuebelfield, Regional Sales Manager

Senior Advertising Coordinator: Tipler Ubbelohde
Advertising Assistant: Janet Whitaker

Sales Assistants

Simeone Doucenas-Lengyel, Lynn Fortunato, Jessica Rebeck

Marketing

Marketing Director: Roy Lendle
Research Director: May Tang
Marketing Coord./rpt.: Jessi Friedenthal

To contact Sales and Advertising, call 415-567-8000
For subscription problems, call 1-800-395-7932



GMR FAMILY CREST

JUST LOOK AROUND MAN.

Race and
race on more than 125
miles of open road.

Encounter
underground
races, secret
specialty shops
and unexpected
challengers.

Customize your
ride. Inside and
out—
spinners,
scissor doors,
audio
upgrades and
detailed
performance
tuning.

Choose from
hundreds of
authentic
aftermarket
parts for
endless
expressions
of style.

Compete in
eight exciting
game modes,
including all-new
Outrun, Downhill Drift,
Street-X and
Showcase.



NEED FOR SPEED
UNDERGROUND



PlayStation 2



DeLuxe

HKC

Electronic Arts

SPC

POST

YOU HAVE A LOT TO SAY. WE HAVE THE SPACE. START TALKIN'.

OOH SMELL THAT SMELL

Why, every month when I take off the protective plastic, does your magazine smell like pumpkins? I've done a smell test in my family, and we all agree your magazine has a very distinct pumpkin aroma. Awaiting your explanation...

_Paul Goodnight

We referred your letter to our printers in Half Moon Bay, CA (the pumpkin capital of the U.S. and home to an annual pumpkin festival). They're stumped as to why your GMRs smell like pumpkins, but they did suggest several pumpkin recipes to spice up your holiday fare.

FABLE WAS I ERE I SAW GBA

In your earlier magazines, you had a separate section for GBA reviews, but now those reviews are just stuck in somewhere. I would really appreciate it if you could resurrect the fallen section.

_Samir Maraj

We see GBA games as being on the same level as console and PC, so why exile them? GMR is a progressive, equal-opportunity magazine, and the GBA segregation had to end. After all, GBA games are people, too.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

I desperately want to work for a gaming magazine, but I have only the slightest idea what to go to college for, or if I have to go to college!

_Birtl

It takes more than desperation and mad plays skills to work for a gaming mag. Excellent writing ability, a professional attitude, and a willingness to work hard under pressure top the list. Most of all, you'll need experience. Get as much as you can; a local fanzine or a fan site are good places to start.

College helps, but it's not absolutely necessary. If you do go, take writing and editing courses and watch for internship openings—many of the gaming mags hire interns, who sometimes end up in full-time staff positions. Good luck.

TATTOO YOU

I have always wanted a gaming tattoo. After months of thought, I went with a Halo tattoo. I was never an FPS fan; I always avoided them. Then along came



Halo, and it changed my thought on the whole genre. This game had the greatest impact on me as a gamer, and that stretches almost 20 years. I am branded for life. It's all about loyalty.

_Daniel Courtney

That's awesome! And did you tattoo a © and trademark line somewhere else on your bod? Dude, now Microsoft totally owns you. Hey, we're just glad you didn't discover a game like Shrek Super Party.

CHICKS GOT GAME?

Your article "Best in Show" (GMR #19) was wicked awesome and very funny, until I got to the category "Girl Only There for Boyfriend." Your exact words were, "Girls don't play videogames. If you see a girl at E3, she's either paid to be there or her boyfriend brought her along to hold his backpack while he plays Mega Man X2B." Sorry guys, that really sucks. I'm a complete gaming geek as well as a CHICK! Not to mention TONS of my friends who are just about as obsessed as me! One of my GIRLFRIENDS owns more than 700 videogames and 10 game systems. I think that you guys should really watch your back on this one, because a horde of angry chick e-mails are probably going to come in agreeing with me on this one. Good day.

_angry chick gamer I→

MESSAGE BOARD JUNKIES

Our Fable review caused quite a stir on the forums. Seems @/0, a great score to be sure, didn't sit well with some folks. In light of this, we now turn to some role-playing fun in the thread entitled "Let's make an RPG."

What shall we have in it? Just common-sense things or unique personal preferences.

One set of extremely rare/expensive/fat-out hard-to-get armor. At least one environment involving desert.

_LuigiSunshine

A beautiful score, recorded by the Philadelphia Orchestra. A four-disc

soundtrack. Fifty hours of a nonlinear story line. A battle system that's part real time, part turn based, and plenty of side missions! Oh, and a hot female sidekick who is seven-eighths naked.

_NeoMaximus

Just as long as it's not in a medieval setting. I'm good—I'm so tired of those...
_atomic_gerbil

I'm getting sick of futuristic RPGs, too. Let's have this one set in a carnival. A carnival in the seventh circle of hell.

_DQ

That should be only a part of the game, not the whole setting. I also want a giant and mini mode, where you can be smaller or gigantic...

_atomic_gerbil I→



→ Last month's dual Fable/D0A: Ultimate covers caused one GMR forum poster to declare, "O! it is here, and it's all...genk!" Hey, pink might make EIC Tom nauseous, but even he has to admit GMR is pretty in it.

Young Man, Life is No Game!



October 14-17
Jacob K. Javits Convention Center
New York City, NY

To register, visit:
www.gameonny.com
www.digitallife.com

digital**life**™ featuring **GameOn NY**

DigitalLife is this year's ultimate technology event for home, work and play – featuring GameOn NY, the first major video game expo & tournament to hit New York City. Test cutting-edge action and sports games, compete in tournaments to win cash prizes, and drop by the Gamers Lounge to catch cool entertainment and celebrity guests.

Don't get left behind! See it all at DigitalLife.

Official Gaming Sponsor:



Designed in Conjunction with:



Sponsors:



WRITE US: GMR@ZIFFDAVIS.COM

That's all well and good, but we need more proof than this! Hey girl gamers, if you really do exist, send us a photo of you playing an actual game. We'll print as many as we can in a future issue, and then we will never doubt you again. Send your digitized self to gmr@ziffdavis.com.

HISTORY BUFFED

I am a new subscriber to your magazine and would like to know the history of your great magazine.

_Arturo Olivo



GMR has been spreading its message of gaming hope and love since its first issue in 1972, when Atari debuted a little game called *Pong*. Sadly, the building that housed the GMR archives burned to the ground in late 2002, which is why our current issues begin with February 2003, at which time we decided to make a brand-new start.

Two words: secret characters.
_kajika

I want a midget and a fat chick as playable characters. Those people always get shafted for character choices.
_XenoBach

I also want an obese man in a wheelchair as a playable character. It could be like Chrono Cross

THE TRIP HAWKINS LEGACY LIVES ON!

Hey, I wrote in to you guys a few months ago [and it got published in the April 2004 issue] about buying a Panasonic 3DO from a local record store with a bunch of games for \$24. Well, I just wanted to tell you that I recently moved and sold the system on eBay for \$185. Heh, \$161 in profit for being at the right place at the right time. Good stuff.

_Brandon Ratliff

Wow, a \$161 profit. Finally, 3DO is making money. Aww, too bad they're, like, dead.

GEORGIE LUCAS REPRESENTS!

You people stink. What were you talking about when you said that *Star Wars Obi-Wan stinks*? That game is classic. And what's wrong with *Phantom Menace*? The movie is just plain awesome, and the game is superb. I can't believe you keep on dising *Star Wars* when they have some of the coolest games ever—excuse me, the coolest games ever (excluding *Nato*). Don't agree? Look at *Bounty Hunter and Star Wars: The Clone Wars and Rogue Squadron*. Those games, especially *Rogue Squadron*, are classics. And look at the upcoming games, *Republic Commando*, *Battlefront*, and no doubt a *Bounty Hunter* sequel. I don't know what you're talking about when you say that *Episode II* sucks. That is the second best movie ever [only *The Lord of the Rings* is better]. Overall, these games rock, and you need to accept it.

_DarthMonkey

Thank you for your e-mail, Mr. Lucas [that call sign didn't fool us for a minute]. We're well aware of your enormous contribution to gaming. To quote one of your most beloved characters, "What was weesa tinkin'!?" ☛

with 40 playable characters...
_atomic_garbil

I'd personally like for it to be called *Crava Cross*, with everyone being obese gross. Even the midget.
_XenoBach

Especially the midget.
_kajika ☛

Ziff Davis Media, Inc.
Chairman & CEO:
Robert T. Callahan
President & COO:
Bart W. Callahan
Chief Financial Officer:
Derrick Inman
Senior Executive Vice President, Publishing Operations:
Tom McInnis
Executive Vice President & Editorial Director:
Michael J. Miller
Executive Vice President, General Counsel & Secretary:
Gregory Barban

Senior Vice Presidents
Jasmine Alexander (Technology & Sales Operations)
Tom Casella (PC Magazine Group)
Chris Doherty (Corporate Sales & Publisher, eWEEK)
Larry Green (Business Development & Worldwide Licensing)
Charles Hahn (Distributors)
Sloan Seymour (Enterprise Group)
Dale Stang (Game Group)
Jason Young (Internet)

Vice Presidents
Sara DeCicco (Database Marketing)
Aron Goldberg (Market Expertise)
Jim Hest (Event Marketing Group)
Julie Hennessy (Event Marketing Group)
Tom Jansson (IP and General Manager, IUPCon)
Michael Krueger (Market Expertise)
Charles Lee (Integrated Media)
Jim Loudenback (Editor-in-Chief, Internet)
Eric Lundquist (Editor-in-Chief, eWEEK)
Chris Magrin (Internet)
Angela Manderson (Internet)
Paul O'Reilly (Event Marketing Group)
Ethan Pearlman (Editor-in-Chief, DO Insight)
Melinda Rogers (Editor, Integrated Media & Corporate Sales)
Beth Roberts (Customer Resources)
Martha Schwartz (Custom/Conference Group)
Pam Spector (Business Development and International Licensing)
Tom Steinhilber (Digital Editor-in-Chief, eWEEK)
Stephen Sutton (Virtual Assistant Development)
Edna Vass (Research & Market Intelligence)
Stephen Walls (Publisher, DO Insight)
Korena Vasa (Event Marketing Group)

Senior Director, Manufacturing: Carlin Lupp
Director of Corporate Communications: Randy Zane

Contact anyone on this masthead via e-mail using: first_name_lastname@ziffdavis.com

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE
Subscription Service 800-895-9571
E-mail: subhelp@ziffmag.com

AD INDEX

Activision	www.activision.com	22-23, 28-29, 55, 64-65, 73, 76-77
Amnesia Online	www.amnesia.com	essent
Atom, Inc.	www.atom.com	96-97
Atlix Software	www.atlix.com	109
Bandai America Inc.	www.bandai.com	117, 153
BMS Music Service	www.bmsmusic.com	98b-99b
CodeMasters, Inc.	www.codemastersusa.com	24-25
D-Sink, LLC	www.d-sink.com	137
Electronic Arts	www.ea.com	14-16, 17
Electronics Boutique/EB World	www.electronicboutique.com	115
Electro Source	www.electrosources.net/atom	129
Foot Locker, Inc.	www.footlockercam.com	79
Full Sail Real World Education	www.fullsail.com	125
Intec, Inc.	www.intecdnk.com	114
Konami Digital Ent.	www.konami.com	45-47, 67, 88-89, 107, 149
LucasArts Entertainment	www.lucasarts.com	2-3
Magico Sales, Inc.	www.magicosales.com	139
Microsoft	www.microsoft.com	8, 9, 21
Namco Hanteltek	www.namco.com	97, 98, 128b-129b, 132
Nokia Telecommunications	www.nokia.com	133
Pepsi-Cola Company	www.mountaindew.com	159
Sage of America	www.sageusa.com	80-89
SNK NEO GEO USA Corp.	www.snkneogeousa.com	31, 41
SOFA	www.sofa.com	4, 5, 51, 75, 91
Sony Pictures Entertainment	www.sonypictures.com	39
Square Enix, Inc.	www.square-enix-usa.com	46-47, 70-71
Take 2 Interactive	www.take2games.com	113, 84-85
Teumo, Inc.	www.teumo.com	92-93
THQ Inc.	www.thq.com	140
US Army	www.gamemag.com	83
Vuori Universal Games	www.vuorigames.com	6, 7, 43, 131
Warrior of the Coast	www.warriorofthecoast.com	31, 38, 37, 95, 119
World Ent. Broad. (AmEx Ent.)	www.worldgames.com	61

WHO YOU ARE IS NOT ALWAYS...
WHO YOU WILL BECOME.



FABLE

FOR EVERY CHOICE, A CONSEQUENCE.



What if the choices you made had everlasting repercussions? Your every action would immediately affect your appearance and change the way people perceive you. Would you wield a sword in the name of virtue, create a path of evil with spells and treachery, or become something in between? Before you create your destiny, know this: no two Fables are the same. What will yours be?

xbox.com/fable



Blood
Sexual Themes
Strong Language
Violence



Microsoft
game studios



it's good to play together

WHAT ARE YOU GET IN



PlayStation 2



GAME BOY ADVANCE



TEEN

T

Blood
Crude Humor
Language
Suggestive Themes
Use of Alcohol
Violence

ESRB CONTENT RATING

www.esrb.org

©2004 Activision, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and THUG is a trademark of Activision, Inc. All rights reserved. Tony Hawk is a registered trademark of Tony Hawk. PlayStation 2, GameCube and Xbox versions developed by Neversoft Entertainment, Inc. Game Boy Advance version developed by Vicarious Visions. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires internet connection, Network Adaptor (for PlayStation 2) and Memory Card (EMC) (for PlayStation 2) (each sold separately). The Online icon is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America, Inc. TM, ®, Game Boy Advance and the Nintendo GameCube are trademarks of Nintendo. ©2001 Nintendo, Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. PC CD-ROM logo TM & ©2003 IBM, GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" design are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. All rights reserved. The raving icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners. Screenshots taken from PlayStation 2 platform.

STARING AT? THE VAN!

It's Team HAWK vs. Team BAM
in an all-out World Destruction Tour!



TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2

ACTIVISION

activision.com

www.thug2online.com



There is nothing I can't do
 No truth I can't find
 No evil I can't stop



PlayStation 2




SECOND SIGHT

A psyche psychic thriller
from the creators of TimeSplitters™

John Yattic awakens from a coma with no memory. What he does remember isn't pretty: a spec ops mission gone wrong, capture, bizarre brain experimentation. He also knows he possesses unimaginable powers. Psychic powers. Armed with these abilities, Yattic must unravel the truth of his past, and destroy the military conspiracy moving in against him.

www.codemasters.com/secondsight

FREE RADICAL

Codemasters 

GENIUS AT PLAY

FRONT

GMR NEWS NETWORK

 IN THE NEWS

FINAL FANTASY VII: ADVENT CHILDREN

We jet to Venice to check out a masterpiece-in-the-making

027

TALENT: MAMORU OSHII

The *Ghost in the Shell 2* director talks about being a dog

032

SCREEN: GHOST IN THE SHELL 2: INNOCENCE

Nine years on, a sequel comes

034

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF ACCLAIM

Once huge, now gone—our history reveals all

036

INTERNATIONAL REPORT: ALIEN SYNDROME

Sega revisits '80s arcade splatter

040





→ Square Enix's top game-making minds are responsible for *Advent Children*. Perhaps trying to stave off a Sports Illustrated disaster, the team is composed of FF vets, all of whom were integral to the creation of the original *FFVII* game. From left to right, scenarist Kazushige Nojima, director and character designer Tetsuya Nomura, and art director Yusuke Kamae all attend the premiere in Venice.



ADVENT CHILDREN

LOVE, INTERNATIONAL STYLE

ITALY

➔ While the sweltering heat beat down on the teeming masses on the small island of Lido, just off the coast of Venice, Italy, spirits remained high as GMR bore witness to the first true unveiling of *Final Fantasy VII: Advent Children Special Edition* (at the Venice International Film Festival).

The movie sequel to the trendsetting PlayStation RPG *Final Fantasy VII, Advent Children* reunites fan-favorite characters Cloud, Tifa, Yuffie, Red XIII, Barrett, Vincent, and Cid for what may be their last adventure together.

Set two years after the events of the

original game, *Advent Children* introduces a new villain, Kadjaj, who is searching for his "mother"—aka Jenovaah—and will use the power of the life force to find her. The life force flows in all things, but as Kadjaj tells a shadowy, cloaked figure known only as Mr. President, "Geostigma is what happens when the body overcompensates."

Geostigma is a sickness that has afflicted many of Midgar's inhabitants since the epic conclusion of *FFVII*, but somehow, Kadjaj has the ability to change the illness into power. Hence the name *Advent Children*—Kadjaj

gathers together dozens of the geostigma-stricken children and channels their power to summon a creature vaguely reminiscent of a bahamut from the sky.

It is this threat that reunites the original *FFVII* crew. It is not without consequence, though. Riddled with survivor's guilt, Cloud's inner turmoil is what really propels the plot; it is a struggle so great that he must come face-to-face with the one he couldn't save: Aerith. It's no great surprise how she manages to appear in the movie, some two years after her death at the hands of

Sephiroth, but suffice it to say, it works. Cloud admits, "I want to be forgiven," and Aerith simply asks him, "By who?"

The movie amazed us at turns, even in its unfinished state, and put our hearts in our throats. Anyone initially dismayed that the sequel to such a beloved game won't be interactive can rest assured this is what you've all been waiting for. Unfortunately, many factors have pushed back the intended release from fall 2004 to spring 2005. Based on the strength of this 25-minute preview, we'd say the wait will be well worth it. Check out www.IUP.com for even more details. ☛



THE WORLD'S
DARKEST HOUR...

...SHALL BE
YOUR FINEST.

"ONE OF THE MOST EXCITING
CONSOLE SHOOTERS IN YEARS."

—*GameSpy*

"THE MOST FRANTIC AND
REALISTIC COMBAT SEQUENCES
EVER PUT INTO A GAME."

—*Game Informer Online*

AVAILABLE FALL 2004

WWW.CALLOFDUTY.COM

Intense battlefield moments put you in the heat of the action.

Together with your squad, take on a variety of combat missions.

Epic single-player missions or go online for Axis vs Allies team-based multiplayer action.

Head to the frontlines and experience the cinematic intensity and chaos of battle of World War II's most legendary conflicts including the Russian infantry charge at Stalingrad, the British PPA Commando raids in North Africa and the American-led tank charges in Germany.

CALL OF DUTY

FINEST HOUR™



PlayStation 2



ACTIVISION

activision.com

© 2004 Activision, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Call of Duty and Call of Duty: Finest Hour are trademarks of Activision, Inc. All rights reserved. PlayStation 2 version developed by Spark Interactive, Inc. Online play requires internet connection. Network play over the PlayStation 2 and Xbox Live only for PlayStation 2 and Xbox 360 respectively. The Delta logo is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox LIVE, the Xbox logo, and the Xbox logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft, Inc. © and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2004 Nintendo. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. GameSpy and the "Powered by GameSpy" logo are trademarks of GameSpy Industries, Inc. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

SPEAKERCOM

TALK LIKE A MAN

U.S.A.

➔ Tired of looking like Judy, the friendly Time-Life operator, whenever you're playing Xbox Live? Finally, there's a good alternative.

Nyko has developed an entirely new type of Xbox Live mic. Called the SpeakerCom, it allows you to step away from the tangle of wires and the irritation of having to fiddle with the mute



button to block side comments. Using push-to-talk technology, SpeakerCom rests entirely in the controller and activates only when you press one of the switches on either side of the unit. The sound is crisp, and people will be able to hear you just fine, if you're playing a spitscreen-compatible Live game, both players can get in on the conversation, SpeakerCom is out now for around \$20. Dignity should always be so cheap. ☛

NES ON GBA

FOUR MORE HERE. MORE THERE

U.S.A.

➔ Nintendo has announced plans to release four more Classic NES Series GBA games.

Zelda II: The Adventure of Link, Castlevania, Dr. Mario, and Metroid will all hit on October 25.

These games are taken from the third series of Japan's Famicom Mini releases. While sales

have been brisk in the United States, Nintendo has already shipped an amazing 2.7 million cartridges in its home territory. Though the third series was intended to be the final set in Japan, Nintendo now won't rule out releasing more games. Although 30 titles have hit shelves in Japan, only 12 have made it here. ☛



[BLIPS]

Re-Rez

➔ Sega is planning to release another run of the cult-classic PS2 music/shooting game **Rez** to the U.S. market in November.

A favorite of more than one GMR editor, Rez marries pounding tunes with stunning visuals and engrossing gameplay. Other sleepers getting the nod are **Panzer Dragon Orta** and **Jet Set Radio Future**, both on Xbox. All will hit for \$19.99. ☛



Aspyrational

➔ In the July GMR, we reported that Bungie founder Alex Seropian bailed to form his own company, **Wideowl Games**. Now Aspyr Media, best known for publishing Mac games, will jump into the console fray by publishing his debut title. It uses Halo tech, but is reportedly a more traditional action game. It's still unnamed and is due on unspecified platforms in 2005. ☛

GAMEPORT VITAL GAME INFO. NOW BOARDING.

➔ ARRIVALS COMING SOON

SYSTEM	ETA	TITLE	HOW HOT?
PS2	OCT	TAIKO DRUM MASTER The drums, but much fun	★★★★
PS2	OCT	GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS Three cities, one thug life	★★★★
XB	OCT	OUTRUN 2 A Ferrari and a hot girl-wait bud	★★★★
PS2	NOV	RATCHET & CLANK: UP YOUR ARSENAL Why, that title's almost naughty!	★★★★
GC/PS2/XB	NOV	LORD OF THE RINGS: THE THIRD AGE It's in his hand at Sorell's game	★★★★
PS2	NOV	METAL GEAR SOLID 3: SNAKE EATER In the '50s, mutants were want-gone	★★★★
GC/PC/PS2/XB	NOV	NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2 Brooks Burke gets racy	★★★★
PS2/XB	NOV	CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR World War II isn't over yet	★★★
XB	NOV	HALO 2 Broadcast providers are already worried	★★★★
XB	NOV	BLINK 2: MASTERS OF TIME & SPACE A game of cat and gig. Walk, pig?	★★★
PC/XB	NOV	SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY Doesn't it seem like we just had one of these?	★★★★
GC	NOV	METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES The GameCubes still kicking-hard	★★★★
PC	NOV	EVERQUEST II So what we're saying is—no free time in November	★★★★
PS2	OEC	GRAN TURISMO 4 2004. The year of monster games.	★★★★
GC	OEC	MARIO PARTY 6 Just in case shootin' fools and racing have you worn out	★★★★
PC/XB	OEC	STAR WARS: KOTOR II—THE SITH LORDS Light versus dark has another go.	★★★★

➔ DEPARTURES OUT NOW

SYSTEM	TITLE	GMR SCORE
PS2	ASTRO BOY Maybe Treasure should have made the PS2 one, too.	5 ¹⁰
PS2/XB	BURNOUT 3: TAKEOVERN Proving you don't need 300 licensed cars for a good time	9 ¹⁰
XB	DEAD OR ALIVE ULTIMATE The ultimate in skimpy outfits, maybe	9 ¹⁰
PC	ODOM 3 Knock, knock, knock on hell's door	8 ¹⁰
XB	FABLE Milesian is disappointed by the lack of fashion options	8 ¹⁰
XB	GALLEON If any it had shipped on Dreamcast	6 ¹⁰
PS2	GRADIUS V Vic Viper's final revenge?	8 ¹⁰
XB	GUILTY GEAR X2 #RELOAD Fresh lighting online	8 ¹⁰
PS2	HOT SHOTS GOLF FORE! Goofy golf makes a solid return	8 ¹⁰
PS2	PHANTOM BRAVE Summon spirits into chunks of wood. It's more fun than it sounds	8 ¹⁰
GC	PIKMIN 2 You and whose army?	8 ¹⁰
PS2/XB	SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM Enough classics couldn't it now?	7 ¹⁰
PC	SOLDIERS: HEROES OF WWII Well, Soldiers, the heroes of a war? You lost us	8 ¹⁰
PS2	SPY FICTION Sneak out of the mall without buying it.	4 ¹⁰
PS2/XB	STREET RACING SYNOGATE Plenty of T&A. Er, we meant "tuning and alignment"	6 ¹⁰
PS2	VIEWTIFUL JOE Still viewtiful after a year	9 ¹⁰

WHEN
WORLDS
COLLIDE,

YOU GET
CHAOS...

SVC CHAOS

SNK vs CAPCOM

THE WORLD OF SNK MEETS THE WORLD OF CAPCOM IN THE REAL WORLD ON XBOX LIVE!



BRING THE CHAOS HOME!

Win an SVC arcade machine and more! Enter at SNKSweeps.com

TEEN
T
ESRB

Animated Blood
Comic Mischief
Violence

ONLY ON
XBOX

XBOX

XBOX
LIVE
PLAYERS ONLY

SNK
NEOGEO

©SNK PLAYMORE 2003 ©CAPCOM CO., LTD. 2003 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. "SNK vs. CAPCOM SVC CHAOS" is manufactured and distributed by SNK PLAYMORE CORPORATION under license from Capcom Co., LTD. "SNK" is a registered trademark of SNK PLAYMORE CORPORATION. "CAPCOM" is a registered trademark of Capcom Co., LTD. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live logos and the Xbox logos are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. No purchase necessary. Open to legal residents of the continental U.S. and Canada, excluding residents of Rhode Island, Florida, Quebec and Puerto Rico, who are 13 years of age or older as of 8/28/04. Void in Rhode Island, Florida, Quebec and Puerto Rico and where prohibited. Sweepstakes ends 11/30/04. www.snkneogeousaconsumer.com

**HBOX
KNOWLEDGE**
THEY KNOW STUFF SO YOU
DON'T HAVE TO!


GREG ORLANDO

STUFFED

➔ Head well the cautionary tale of "California" Scott Weinstein.

Through the dim and misty testosterone and Cheez Doodle-fueled haze of my teenage years, Weinstein and I were beleaguered souls in a world clearly not meant for such genius and pimple-ridden faces.

Often, Weinstein would drag me to a buffet. There was no man like him for the all you can eat, and he would put away whatever it was in front of him like a panzer chewing up Poland. He was determined. Determined not to have a meal, but rather to get his money's worth.

Now we all want to belly up, and as I rapidly plummet toward buffet, I see it clearly. The buffet mentality has swallowed us whole. In cars, we believe that we are absolutely not cool until we're driving the yuppie equivalent of a tank. In movies, it's the eight-hour director's cut. With videogames, we're not satisfied unless the game takes 50 hours to beat. Why?

Witness the fable of *Fable*. When reviewers claimed the Xbox RPG took 10 to 20 hours to complete, damage control kicked in, with people claiming *Fable* could be played for hundreds of hours. Hundreds!

And all I see is Weinstein, stuffing his face. He got his money's worth, but I suspect he never tasted a thing. ☛
_Greg Orlando is an editor at Xbox Nation.

[TALENT]
*** MAMORU OSHII**
THE GHOST IN THE MACHINE

➔ When you enter into a discussion of top anime directors, a few names float to the top. One of them is Mamoru Oshii. Since bursting onto the scene in the '80s, he's been refining his vision and creating a string of philosophical megahits that are like no one else's. His latest film, *Innocence*, is the sequel to the 9-year-old classic *Ghost in the Shell*.

GMR: Did the increasing popularity of anime in the U.S. in general and *Ghost in the Shell* in particular affect the creation of *Innocence*?

MO: I couldn't help being aware of it from the point of view of production. However, I wasn't intentionally aware of it from the [artistic] point of view as a director.

GMR: At Cannes, you made comments about the basset hound representing you. Would you care to elaborate?

MO: In order to supplement the contemporary individual's loss of a conscious sense of the self as a body [in this increasingly technological age], I thought that a dog was necessary. That is, the dog is an extension of the self, a sort of substitution for the human body that is now lost to us as a concept.

GMR: Batou is a fascinating character.

What elements of his personality were the most interesting to you as a director?

MO: I couldn't think of anybody besides him as the main character of this film. In a sense, Batou is me, myself.

GMR: Western action movies rarely get so philosophical, but the mix seems to work well. What do you think is different about anime?

MO: Since philosophy is not originally purely theoretical and academic [but a part of the human experience], I don't feel it unnatural to give the film a philosophical side. If there is any difference between anime and other types of film, it's probably that anime can pursue the expression of ideas more freely without being affected by realistic considerations such as the images of actors.

GMR: A great many sections in *Innocence* feature rapid-fire quote exchanges between the main characters, almost to the point where it overshadows the original dialogue. Why?

MO: Every piece of speech means something, and every bit of dialogue was carefully selected [for this movie]. Unless there is something that has never been said before, I think it may be best to quote the great words

which the eminent intellectuals of the past have left for us.

GMR: Your films are generally more cerebral than your average anime. Some of your films have very little action at all. How would you explain your use of action in your movies?

MO: I have never made a film limited strictly to the genre of "the action movie," and I create scenes [action or not] by simply answering to the needs of each work.

GMR: In another interview, you said that you don't intend to make another *Ghost in the Shell* movie. Is it possible you'll change your mind? If not, what's next?

MO: For me, *Ghost in the Shell* is complete, and so at least for now, I have no intention of making another sequel. It's too early for me to announce anything on my next project yet. ☛



➔ You'd think one of the most successful and renowned directors in Japan would look a little happier. He's probably contemplating the virtues of human existence. Or lunch.



We Made the First Level.



© 2013 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved. Dungeons & Dragons, Dungeons & Dragons logo, and the Dungeons & Dragons logo are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. © 2013 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.



Clearing out monsters and racking up experience points started with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® roleplaying game. And with an endless number of spells, skills, and special abilities to choose from, it's still the best way to level up and take on whatever comes next.

We did it first. We still do it best. playdnd.com



PLAYSTATION
KNOWLEDGETHEY KNOW STUFF SO YOU
DON'T HAVE TO!

JOHN DRAVISON

TASTES

➔ In a couple of weeks, you'll get your hands on *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas*, possibly the most eagerly anticipated game of all time. Xbox owners may be giddy about *Halo 2*, but let's face it, there just aren't as many of them. Rockstar will ship 10 million copies of *GTA* worldwide.

This year, there are more huge hits than ever before. *Metal Gear Solid 3*, *Need for Speed Underground 2*, *Gran Turismo 4*, *Madden*, *Def Jam Fight for NY*. By the end of the year, more than 100 PS2 games will have shipped. Besides these megahits, what else should you be playing?

First, try the genuinely funny RPG *The Bard's Tale*, which, suicidally, is out the same day as *San Andreas*.

Second, go for *Burnout 3* over any of the other racers it may be an EA game, but it's still the underdog. For me, it could be the game of the year.

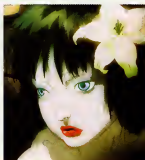
Next, try *Alan Wake*, put together by a self-funded indie team. It plays like *Metal Slug*, so believe me—you'll like it.

Misc your annual dose of formulaic *Final Fantasy*? Try something genuinely different—the stylish *Shin Megami Tensei: Nocturne*.

Finally, don't overlook *Killzone*. It's not *Halo*, but if people would stop saying, "It's the PS2's *Halo*-killer," it wouldn't bother you so much. It's a good game in a genre in which the PS2 is lacking. **E**

John Dravisson is editor-in-chief of the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine.

[SCREEN]



TO GHOST IN THE SHELL 2: INNOCENCE

SCI-FI MIND GAMES REVISITED

IN THEATERS NOW // 99 MINUTES // RATED PG-13

➔ *Ghost in the Shell* holds a singular place in the massive hierarchy of anime films released in the United States. Perhaps second in significance only to *Akira*, it stands at the pinnacle of the art form's popularity here. More important, *Ghost* defines the art form for most casual viewers of the medium. The *Matrix* would not have been born without *Ghost in the Shell*, and that has to count for something.

Despite the immense popularity of the film and the comic that spawned it, there's precious little actual *Ghost in the Shell*-related material to buy. Since the original movie hit theaters in 1996, only a single volume of manga has come out. A PlayStation game hit in 1997 and sunk beneath the waves.

But now, the floodgates are

opening: A new TV series, *Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex*, has begun its DVD release, and a game based on it is due from Bandai in November. [Check our July issue for the skinny on both of 'em.]

Most important, film director Mamoru Oshii has broken his lengthy silence on the subject and delivered a movie of stunning imagery and mind-boggling complexity. *Innocence*, aka *Ghost in the Shell 2*. This film is as contemplative and action packed as the original, but its feel is significantly, if subtly, changed.

Maj. Makoto Kusanagi, the striking heroine of the first film, has disappeared into the Net. This leaves her bulky partner, Batou, who's carrying on with Section 9, to lead an increasingly solitary life. *Innocence* is, as the original was, a movie about

cybercrime, with plenty of ass-kicking action, but it's also a film about Batou's personal struggles to keep his humanity in a world where the woman he respects most ultimately made the choice to give hers up.

Technology is essential to the film's plot, but it's just as important to its production. Oshii has leveraged the latest digital techniques to produce a mixture of traditional animation and computer graphics. *Innocence* is a visual feast, from the grungy alleyway where Batou encounters the first malfunctioning android to the glittering parade scene he witnesses as he's on the verge of tracking down the parties to blame for its malfunction. True care and attention to detail make *Innocence* a movie to be savored. Fortunately, with a little work, you can track down a theater to watch it in. **E**

We Gave Boss Monsters Their First Job.



All trademarks, including the name "Dungeons & Dragons" and the Dungeons & Dragons logo, are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2008 Wizards. Illustration by Mike Lee.

Cracking skulls on the way to fight the Big Bad Guy started in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® roleplaying game. And with thousands of monsters and countless ways to customize them, it's still the best way to go to work.

We did it first. We still do it best. playdnd.com



NINTENDO
KNOWLEDGE
THEY KNOW STUFF SO YOU
DON'T HAVE TO!

MARK MACDONALD

VIVA LA...

➔ "Revolution" is the code name for Nintendo's next home system, with good reason. "We're thinking of an innovative idea for our next-generation console that's completely different from consoles in the past," says Nintendo President Satoru Iwata. "It will be clearly distinct from the other next-generation consoles."

To anyone tempted to dismiss this as empty hype, may I remind you Nintendo is about to release a dual-screen portable that includes a touch screen and a microphone.

So what's so revolutionary about Nintendo's next console? Most likely how you interface with the machine. "What's important isn't next-generation technology," says Iwata, "but a next-generation way in playing games."

Nintendo's been experimenting with various control gimmicks for years—the motion-sensing tech of *Kirby's Tall n' Tumblin'*, the voice control of *Hey You, Pikachu!*—and more recently with the bong-bashing antics of *Donkey Kong: Jungle Beat*.

What combination, if any, of these methods will appear in the new console when it's unveiled this May? Knowing Nintendo, well, who knows? Only one thing is for sure: The Revolution will be teased. ☛

—Mark MacDonald is executive editor at Electronic Gaming Monthly.

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF
ACCLAIMA 17-YEAR HISTORY. BOTH GOOD AND BAD
U.S.A.

➔ Acclaim has announced it will be seeking Chapter 7 bankruptcy—total liquidation, which will result in the complete dissolution of the company. Once a powerhouse publisher, the company has lately struggled just to survive. It recently lost its funding and was unable to secure a new loan, leading to its ultimate downfall. While Acclaim's legacy is hardly unmixed, it still feels like the end of an era.

Founded in 1987, Acclaim grew quickly thanks to its titles for Nintendo's world-conquering NES system. Many of its games featured popular movie licenses; this would prove to be both a good and a bad thing for Acclaim.

It gave the company a number of hits but quickly sullied its reputation, as many of its movie games were quite bad. *Total Recall* and *Friday the 13th* (the latter released under the LJN brand) are notable examples. Fortunately, original games like *Rare's Wizards & Warriors* series offset the damage those caused.

As the 16-bit era dawned, Acclaim had built itself into a powerhouse. This transition became complete when the company released Midway's immensely popular *Mortal Kombat* games for the SNES and Genesis. The *NBA Jam* series, again based on Midway arcade titles, also proved to be a big hit.

Movie licenses, however, continued to be the company's Achilles' heel—most famously a game based on big-budget stinker *Cuthroat Island*, which was as unpopular as the movie.

Acclaim's most memorable function on the PlayStation and Sega Saturn was providing releases for Taito's games in the United States. It handled such sleeper hits as *Galactic Attack*, *Darius Gaiden*, and several *Bust-A-Move* games.

The Nintendo 64 wasn't kind to many third-party publishers, but Acclaim thrived thanks to the *Turok* series. Things didn't last, though; Acclaim flooded the platform with *Turok* games of decreasing relevance.

The current generation has been extremely hard on the company. *Turok: Evolution* seemed likely to bring the series to renewed prominence, but it debuted in 2002 to critical disdain and wildly disappointing sales. Stores returned thousands of copies to Acclaim. Meanwhile, its *NFL Quarterback Club* franchise folded in 2002.

While the press loved *Aggressive Inline*, nobody bought it, and developer Z-Axis was scooped up by Activision. *BMX XXX*, Z-Axis' last game for Acclaim, caused Dave Mirra to sue the company; it also flopped. Idiotic marketing campaigns—remember the stooges who changed their names to *Turok*?—further sullied the company's reputation.

Earlier this year, the Olsen twins sued Acclaim over unpaid royalties and brand damage. Acclaim lost the Major League Baseball and *Turok* licenses, handicapping the company immensely.



And EA scooped up *Burnout* right as the series was poised to finally take off. The fates of *The Real Star*, *Juiced*, and *100 Bullets*—Acclaim's 2004 lineup—are still unknown as of press time. Given that the first two games are both complete and promising, it seems likely that a new publisher will snap them up. ☛

[BLIPS]

Shining beat

➔ Sega has released initial details of its new *Shining Force* game. Unlike upcoming RPG *Shining Tears*, it will feature full 3D graphics. Yuriko Nishiyama, known in the United States for Toypop's basketball manga *Harlem Beat*, is handling character designs. With battles featuring up to 20 foes, *Shining Force* is due in 2005 in Japan. No U.S. release has yet been announced for either new *Shining* game. Visit <http://shining-force.jp> to scope the art.



We Invented Godmode.



Available at a
Game Store Near You

Powering up your character to take out everything in sight started with the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® roleplaying game. And with the D&D® Basic Game, you've got everything you need to start blowing through level after level of monsters.

We did it first. We still do it best.
playdnd.com

30th
Anniversary
DUNGEONS
& DRAGONS

EXPERIENCE COUNTS



All trademarks, including character names and their distinctive likenesses, are property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ©2008 Wizards. Illustration by John Lee.

PC
KNOWLEDGE
THEY KNOW STUFF, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO

JEFF GREEN

THE FEAR

➔ You are not too cool for *The Sims 2*. I promise. The very fact that you are reading a gaming magazine has already given you away as a geek. Actual cool people don't read for write for them. So let's drop that notion right now.

Like *Myst* before it, *The Sims* has become a victim of its own success. If this many people like it, including *ign*'s own moms and sisters, then it must be lame—right? And the fact that this game focuses not on shooting things, but on suspiciously nonmasculine activities like home decoration makes it only that much worse. What if one of your buddies came over right when you were picking out some cool new purple drapes? Could you quickly Alt-Tab over to *Doom 3* before he saw you?

The truth of the matter is, like other games of this nature—Nintendo's awesome *Animal Crossing* comes to mind—you may not be cool enough for *The Sims 2*. I love shooters as much as the next guy, but if you think that your ability to shoot digital aliens somehow makes you more of a bada\$\$ than the guy who spends his gaming hours buying floor lamps for his Sims, then I contend that you need to get out more.

The Sims 2 is one of the best, most addictive games of the year—despite the fact that our moms may like it. Don't be afraid. ☺

Jeff Green is editor-in-chief of *Computer Gaming World*.

GMR CHARTS

TOP-SELLING GAMES FOR EVERY SYSTEM FOR AUGUST '04

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
EBGAMES™
electronics boutique

TOP 10 ALL FORMATS

RANK	TITLE	FORMAT	SCORE
01	MADDEN NFL 2005 The reigning king returns.	PS2	9
02	MADDEN NFL 2005 As it is on PS2, so it is on Xbox. Now with Live, too.	XB	9
03	000M 3 If only demons played football.	PC	8
04	ESPN NFL 2K5 Entering its second month, ESPN still performs.	PS2	8
05	ESPN NFL 2K5 Though not quite as well as Madden, mind you...	XB	8
06	RAINBOW SIX 3: BLACK ARROW Xbox Live and let die.	XB	7
07	MADDEN NFL 2005 Cube owners also like football. Not a shock.	GC	9
08	TALES OF SYMPHONIA The little RPG that could.	GC	8
09	HALO Clearly, Halo 2 anticipation is reaching scary levels.	XB	10
10	HOT SHOTS GOLF FORE! Wind down after some hardcore Madden.	PS2	8

PS2 TOP 10

RANK	TITLE	SCORE
01	MADDEN NFL 2005	9
02	ESPN NFL 2K5	8
03	HOT SHOTS GOLF FORE!	8
04	SPIDER-MAN 2	8
05	NCAA FOOTBALL 2005	8
06	DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION MAX 2	NR
07	CHAMPIONS OF NORRATH	8
08	ORIV3R	5
09	ATHENS 2004	5
10	DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION MAX	8

XBOX TOP 10

RANK	TITLE	SCORE
01	MADDEN NFL 2005	9
02	ESPN NFL 2K5	8
03	RAINBOW SIX 3: BLACK ARROW	7
04	HALO	10
05	ESPN NHL 2K5	8
06	MORROWIND: GOTY EDITION	NR
07	STAR WARS: KOTOR	10
08	NCAA FOOTBALL 2005	8
09	SPIDER-MAN 2	8
10	SUOKEI	6

PC TOP 10

RANK	TITLE	SCORE
01	000M 3	8
02	CITY OF HEROES	8
03	CALL OF DUTY	7
04	STAR WARS: KOTOR	10
05	RISE OF NATIONS	8
06	ANARCHY ONLINE	NR
07	FINAL FANTASY XI	9
08	THE POLITICAL MACHINE	NR
09	DIABLO II: LORD OF DESTRUCTION	8
10	THE SIMS: DOUBLE DELUXE	NR

GBA TOP 10

RANK	TITLE	SCORE
01	YU-GI-OH! RESHUF OF DESTRUCTION	NR
02	MARIO VS. DONKEY KONG	7
03	SUPER MARIO ADVANCE—SUPER MARIO BROS. 3	9
04	MEGA MAN BATTLE NETWORK 4: BLUE MON	8
05	MEGA MAN BATTLE NETWORK 4: RED SWIRL	8
06	MARIO GOLF ADVANCE TOUR	9
07	SPIDER-MAN 2	NR
08	POKEMON RUBY	7
09	POKEMON SAPPHIRE	7
10	DRAGON BALL Z: SUPERBIC WARRIORS	NR

GC TOP 10

RANK	TITLE	SCORE
01	MADDEN NFL 2005	9
02	TALES OF SYMPHONIA	8
03	PIKMIN 2	8
04	WWE DAY OF RECKONING	NR
05	SPIDER-MAN 2	8
06	MEGA MAN ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION	9
07	THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS ADVENTURES	8
08	SUPER SMASH BROS. MELEE	8
09	ANIMAL CROSSING	9
10	MARIO KART: DOUBLE DASH!!	10

PRE-ORDER MANIA

WHAT'S HOT? GMR PRESENTS EB GAMES' BEST DEALS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
EBGAMES[™]
electronics boutique[™]

TOP 5 PRE-ORDERS

RANK	TITLE	FORMAT
01	HALO 2 Limited collectors' edition available	XB
02	GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS	PS2
03	HALF-LIFE 2 Limited collectors' edition available	PC
04	WORLD OF WARCRAFT WarCraft novel: <i>The Well of Eternity</i>	PC
05	EVERQUEST II Starter kit with character-creation tool, item, and behind-the-scenes info	PC

CURRENT PRE-ORDER DEALS

TITLE	FORMAT	DATE
THE BARD'S TALE DVD with bonus material	PS2/XB	10/19
MEN OF VALOR DVD with bonus material	PS2/XB	10/26
STAR WARS GALAXIES: JUMP TO LIGHTSPEED Priority entry into beta, exclusive in-game vehicle	PC	10/26
PLAYBOY: THE MANSION 2009 Playboy calendar	PC/PS2/XB	11/02
METROID PRIME 2: ECHOES T-shirt	GC	11/15
EVERQUEST II Starter kit with character-creation tool, item, and behind-the-scenes info	PC	11/15
CALL OF DUTY: FINEST HOUR Bonus American GI figure	GC/PS2/XB	11/16
DRAGON BALL Z: BUDDOKAI 3 Trading cards, including exclusive Hi-Tech card	PS2	11/16
BATEN KAITOS Wall scroll	WB	11/16
RESIDENT EVIL 4 DVD with bonus material	GC	01/11

Get cool stuff with your games, while supplies last

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF GODZILLA!

Pick up the movies that caused the mayhem!



GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA
PG



GODZILLA VS. GIGAN
PG



GODZILLA VS. HEDORAH
PG

Now Available for the First Time on DVD!

SPECIAL FEATURES

- AVAILABLE IN BOTH ORIGINAL JAPANESE LANGUAGE WITH ENGLISH SUBTITLES AND DUBBED IN ENGLISH
- WIDESCREEN PRESENTATION
- PREVIEWS INCLUDE THE JAPANESE THEATRICAL TRAILER FOR THE UPCOMING GODZILLA TOKYO S.O.S. DVD RELEASE

3 & 5 PACKS ALSO AVAILABLE



www.SonyPictures.com



© 2004 Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Godzilla is a registered trademark of Toho Co., Ltd. Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla is a registered trademark of Toho Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

Godzilla vs. Gigan is a registered trademark of Toho Co., Ltd. Godzilla vs. Hedorah is a registered trademark of Toho Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

Godzilla vs. Hedorah is a registered trademark of Toho Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

Godzilla vs. Gigan is a registered trademark of Toho Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

Godzilla vs. Hedorah is a registered trademark of Toho Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

Godzilla vs. Gigan is a registered trademark of Toho Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

Godzilla vs. Hedorah is a registered trademark of Toho Co., Ltd. All Rights Reserved.

COMING SOON
GODZILLA
VIDEO GAME

INCURABLE

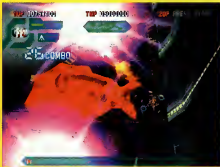
IT'S NO CLASSIC, BUT ALIEN SYNDROME'S NOT BAD

● JAPAN

➔ *Golden Axe*, the consensus worst of the PS2 *Sega Ages* remakes, was hurt by its horrible graphics, but it was ruined because *Golden Axe* was never actually that much fun to begin with. *Alien Syndrome*, the latest *Sega Ages* entry, has one of those problems but not quite both. It looks lousy, but it highlights the fact that blasting aliens into clouds of slime is a concept with some legs.

The original *Syndrome*, released back in 1986, was an early top-down two-player shooter, a sort of sci-fi precursor to *Smash TV*. It's a race against time as much as a shoot-'em-up—the goal isn't to whack all the aliens (although whacking aliens helps), it's to rescue all the cocooned human hostages and escape an infected spaceship before the timer runs out. If the clock winds down, the ship self-destructs and it's adios, muchachos.

Sega's PS2 revival gives the game an ugly 3D makeover, splicing the goopy charm of the original's sharp sprites, but it adds a couple of *godsend*s in the form of dual-analog controls and a wicked array of new weapons. The bigger guns and better control are matched by tougher boss encounters, making this a reasonably worthwhile 16-bit nostalgia trip. **B+**



➔ *Neo Contra* this is not, but it's a reasonably priced blaster with an array of goopy creatures that openly rip off the *Alien* films. Ah, the '80s—an alien in every home!



2D Fighters
don't change
until the King decrees it so.

KING OF FIGHTERS MAXIMUM IMPACT

The synthesis of breathtaking 3D animation with the heart and soul of a 2D classic is now complete.



Suggestive Themes
Violence

PlayStation 2



© 2005 PLAYMOPE, THE KING OF FIGHTERS™ is a registered trademark of SNK. Licensing partner of SNK. "SNK" & "NEOGEO" are registered trademarks of SNK. KING OF FIGHTERS™ is a trademark of SNK. King of Fighters™ is a registered trademark of SNK. PlayStation 2™ is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

They Fought For Freedom...
They Fought For Each Other.

MEN OF VALOR



Experience the Real Vietnam War—from
Jungle-Based Ambushes to Intense
Urban Firefights



Pick Your Four of Duty—Single-Player
Campaign or Multiplayer via Xbox Live
and System Link

www.menofvalorgame.com



WIRELESS
LIVE
PLAY

PC
CD-ROM
DIGITAL



2015



© 2004 EA GAMES, Inc. All rights reserved. Developed by EA GAMES, Inc. Men of Valor, 2015 and their respective logos are trademarks of EA GAMES, Inc. Vivendi Universal Games and the Vivendi Universal logo are trademarks of Vivendi Universal Games, Inc. Ubisoft and its logos are registered trademarks of Ubisoft Games, Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live and the Xbox logo, and the Xbox Live logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. © 2004 THQ, EA GAMES, Inc. and its licensors. All rights reserved. Bully and the Bully logo are trademarks of Bully Entertainment, Inc. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners.



**EVEN WHEN YOU LOSE,
YOU WIN.**

"We're impressed... the game plays as good as it looks." – PSM

"Looks amazing... plays fantastic." – Play Magazine | "Face it. You've always wanted this." – 1up.com



They're on top of you. You're on top of them. Does it really matter? All female wrestlers. 10,000 polygons per character. And hardcore wrestling gameplay. It's Rumble Roses and it's definitely a win-win situation.

RUMBLE ROSES



PlayStation 2



Begin Your Journey



Enter the amazing world of Vana'diel.[®]
Join an ever-growing population
of adventurers in exploring the only
online FINAL FANTASY game, the
award-winning FINAL FANTASY XI!

Available
for Windows

Or specially packaged
with the Hard Disc Drive
for your PlayStation[®] 2
computer entertainment system



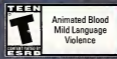
Expand the Adventure



The world of Vana'diel gets even
bigger with this FINAL FANTASY XI
expansion pack, featuring massive
new regions to explore, frightening
new enemies to engage, and an
unfolding mystery to confront.



PlayStation.2



PC
CD-ROM
SOFTWARE

For
Windows



©2005 Square Enix. All Rights Reserved. Final Fantasy, Final Fantasy Online, and Vana'diel are trademarks of Square Enix.

NEXT



WARNING! HAZARDOUS MATERIAL

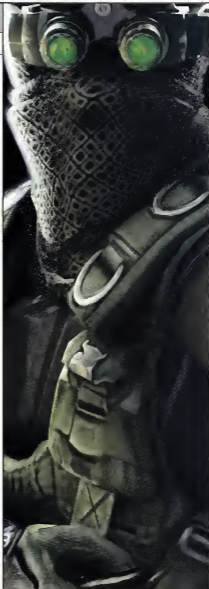


Here at *GMR*, we preview games a little differently. To ensure that our previews are as relevant as possible, we feature only titles that will be released within six months. We also record our level of excitement about each game with cool little flames. Previews are not reviews—they're merely a guide as to how good a game in progress is looking. They're snapshots. If we're not very excited about a game, it gets one or two flames. If we're taking a wait-and-see attitude, expect to see three flames. Over and above that, you can bet we're pretty excited. It's our duty to tell you what we think at every stage of a game's development cycle—positive, negative, or somewhere in between.

INCOMING GAMES PREVIEWED

PREVIEWED THIS ISSUE:

ALIEN HOMINO	GC/PS2	072
BLOOD WILL TELL	PS2	081
CLOSE COMBAT: FIRST TO FIGHT	PC/MB	050
DRAGON BALL Z: BUDDHAI 3	PS2	054
FATAL FRAME 2: DIRECTOR'S CUT	MB	056
GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS	PS2	052
KILLZONE	PS2	049
KUON	PS2	056
MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: CLUB EDITION	PS2/MB	058
NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2	GC/PS2/MB	074
TAIKO DRUM MASTER	PS2	080
TONY HAWKS UNDERGROUND 2: WORLD DESTRUCTION TOUR	GC/PS2/MB	050
THE URBZ: SIMS IN THE CITY	GC/PS2/MB	078
VIEWTIFUL JOE 2	GC/PS2	056
WARHAMMER 40,000: DAWN OF WAR	PC	052

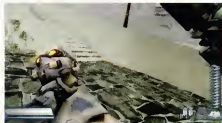
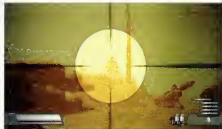


RELEASE | OCTOBER

KILLZONE

MAKE WITH THE PERFORMANCE

Console PS2 Publisher SOGA Developer GUERRILLA GAMES



→ Get up close and personal with the helghast via Killzone's simple melee interface. Run up to the offending bad guy and press X. Rifle-butt get!



Strange as it may seem, *Killzone* is Sony's first entry into the PS2 first-person shooter race. And although it's from an untested developer, PS2 fans don't hold back from dubbing *Killzone* a "Halo killer" immediately after it was announced in 2003. Of course, killing *Halo 2* is the new task, and Sony's effort will bravely pursue that monumental goal.

Like *Halo 2*, *Killzone* offers both single-player and online multiplayer shootin' on an epic scale: There are 11 huge levels, 26 weapons, and a handful

of playable characters (four unique heroes in single-player and troops of both good-guy ISA and plumb-evil helghast in multiplayer). It's traditional run-n-gun warfare against the backdrop of a world-encompassing war.

In single-player, you begin with only one character, Templar, but quickly amass a cadre of four ISA heroes who fight together as a team. You don't have to issue commands or switch to your comrades, though—intelligent A.I. commands them alongside you. And even though you'll

be forced to choose a specific character when you first tackle a level, you can later play through with other heroes, blazing new paths that take advantage of their unique strengths.

Killzone's impressive visuals, balanced weaponry, and expansive levels mimic the *Halo* mold, as do its limited weapon inventory and regenerating shields. "We allow you to carry three weapons at any given time," says Product Manager Alastair Burns. "We want players to experiment with different combinations while keeping it

realistic and believable." You'll be happy to have that Master Chief-style regeneration when scampering through these war zones. "We have so many bullets flying around that a stray shot could hit you very easily, ruining the player's roller-coaster ride through our world," Burns muses. "So we allowed for the health recharge to give you a fighting chance." ☛

GMA SAYS → *Halo-killer* it ain't, but bore fire FPS entertainment on PS2 it is. That's worth gold

→ HOW HOT... ★★★★★

RELEASE | OCTOBER

TONY HAWK'S UNDERGROUND 2: WORLD DESTRUCTION TOUR

WHOM GODS DESTROY, THEY FIRST MAKE SKATE

DEVELOPER: GAMESBOT PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION CANCELLED: NEVERSOFT



→ How the heck Neversoft keeps coming up with new ways to make us buy another one of its skateboarding games is beyond our ability to comprehend, but the quality never fades, and we keep coming back. Expect THUG 2 to contain all the things you love about the series, with new features that will make this the best Tony Hawk game yet.



➔ The original *Tony Hawk's Underground* chronicled your rise to international skateboarding stardom, but fame is fleeting. When *Underground 2's* story mode kicks off, Bam Margera skips over the lead character to pick a teenager in a body cast for his world destruction team.

This isn't a game for players with low self-esteem. If the Jackass crew isn't hassling you, the jacked-up difficulty level picks up the slack. Tony Hawk veterans should welcome the challenge, though.

Underground 2 packs more goals in multiple layers through each level. For instance, there's a "special guest" hidden in every stage. Finding that celebrity (in level one, it's Jesse James of *Monster Garage* fame) unlocks a new set of goals built around that character, as well as a special vehicle (like Jesse's souped-up scooter!). Meanwhile, even the default goal lists include tough new rhythm-based challenges and linked sets of progressive goals. Aside from unlocking his goals, finding Jesse reveals his mobile halfpipe/RV hybrid—

try pulling a long revert combo on a moving ramp.

Underground 2 is as much about style as substance, though. The *Viva la Bam* attitude is in full effect—while the original *Underground* mixed in a little of his antisocial attitude, *World Destruction Tour* doesn't hold back. You'll splatter graffiti, decapitate statues, and amuse yourself at the expense of the handicapped...and that's just in the first stage. It's messy, it's politically incorrect, and it's damn funny most of the time, except for the easily offended.

The easily offended can just play the classic mode, which strips out the extras for old-school thumb-twitching *Tony Hawk*, or tool around in the edit modes, which include complete customization options for levels, goals, tricks, difficulty, graphics, decks, and all the rest. Depending on your taste and tolerance, there's as much or as little destruction here as you want. **LE**

GMA SAYS → The next evolution in the genre's best skating game. It's what you need.

➔ **HOW HOT...** ★★★★★

Syphon Filter
THE OMEGA STRAIN



▲ [unreadable] ▲

YOUR PHONE CALLS TO NEWARK ARE EXTREMELY IMPORTANT.

REPORT TO: GRANT (00001) (C) (M) (F) (00000000) IN CHIEF.

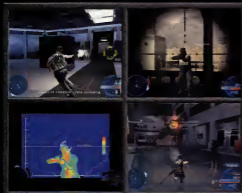
OBJECTIVE: STOP [unreadable] FROM ESCAPING TO TERRORISTS WHO WANT TO

ARSENAL: 100% HEALTH, 100% AMMO, 100% WEAPON, SILENCED, UMBRELLA, GUN, DISC, THERMAL IMAGING, [unreadable]

MISSION OBJECTIVES: ELIMINATE [unreadable] AND PREVENT RELEASE OF DEADLY MUTATING VIRUS. [unreadable] WILL BE HEAVILY CLASSIFIED AS YOU WILL BE [unreadable] INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION SUCCESS OF THIS GLOBAL [unreadable] OPERATION IS CRUCIAL.

PRIORITY: URGENT

THE BEST WEAPON WE HAVE IS YOU.



PlayStation 2



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD
PLAY IN OURS.

RELEASE | OCTOBER

GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS

BANG. BANG. MUNCH. MUNCH!

DEVELOPER PS2 CRACKSHIP ROCKSTAR DEVELOPER ROCKSTAR NORTH



→ CJ (above, left, you know the drill) better check himself on that pizza list! Players must watch his diet or else he'll expand to less user-friendly dimensions, which will make outkicking the opposition a difficult prospect.



The new kid on the block who's keeping things real in *Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas* is CJ, an everyday gangsta from the mean streets of Orange Grove. But this gun-clapper has to do more than harass rival gang members and watch his back—he has to watch his weight, too. That's right. Mr. Snake isn't the only badass on the Jenny Craig tip this year.

Don't think you can just run to the nearest hot-dog stand and stuff CJ with as much food as you can to

power up. You do that and he'll just throw it up! Eating without working out will make him fat. It will show in his appearance as his stomach bulges, his walk becomes a waddle, and he constantly has to catch his breath. You have to get in the gym every now and then and work those calories off. If not, our hero will turn into a sloppy fighter, he'll get clowned by everyone in the hood, and the women will show him no love! Oh, man!

If CJ doesn't eat, it'll have a direct

impact on his performance in the game as well. If you ignore the hunger indicator that appears when he needs to stop for a bite, he'll get thin and weak, his punches will go soft, and his clothes will fit loosely. He won't be able to lift boxes or run (like he needs to either, making CJ a walking pile of weasauce. Eating in moderation and staying fit is key.

Working out does more than keep the pounds off, though—it makes CJ a better fighter as well. You can actually build muscle mass and give him the

power to hit like Roy Jones! Cardio helps as well: Biking and running will boost his stamina so that he can get away from rival gang members, stay underwater longer (during swimming sessions), and recover more quickly after a brawl.

This should give critics of *Grand Theft Auto* some food for thought. Ha ha ha! Oh, man. We're killin' it. ■■

GMA SAYS → Rockstar may have to rename this *Grand Theft Drive-Through*

→ HOW HOT... ★★★★★

Staff Sergeant Donald Washington, 11B Infantry

WHAT'S SO COOL ABOUT WORKING ON COMPUTERS IN THE ARMY? SOME OF THEM CAN DO SIXTY.



AN ARMY OF ONE

With an integrated thermal weapons sight, GPS and on-the-go central tire inflation system, the 350 horsepower, 19-ton Stryker is basically an armored computer. As a tech support Soldier, I keep the Stryker's systems up and running. That means the entire Army can stay up and running, too. There are over 200 ways to be a Soldier. Find the right one for you at GOARMY.COM * 1-800-USA-ARMY



U.S. ARMY

©2011 Army. All rights reserved. Army and U.S. Army are trademarks of the Department of Defense.

RELEASE | NOVEMBER

DRAGON BALL Z: BUDOKAI 3

THIS PLANET STILL ISN'T BIG ENOUGH FOR BOTH OF US

CREATOR PS2 DEVELOPER AZARE DEVELOPER DIMPS



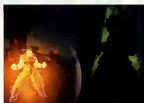
→ The Kame, the Hame, and the He are gleefully intact as Goku and company prepare to fire a flaming fusillade of freakin' fireballs at Frieza and the rest of the Dragon Ball brigade. You love it.



↪ Daisuke Uchiyama is in an enviable position. Producer for the *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai* series at Osaka, Japan-based Dimps, he is one of the main people behind a series that sells millions and is beloved by kids (and, as they call adult *DBZ* fans in Japan, "our grown-up friends") worldwide. What's the problem, then? "It's important for us to continually improve the game's content," Uchiyama says, "but, of course, we can't do anything to the characters that would alienate fans of the series."

Along those lines, the third *Budokai* will feature major changes to its fighting mechanics, basic move sets, and single-player story mode—but all with an eye toward remaining true to the original show's *hai-keebe* antics.

The stated goal of the *Budokai 3* team, in Uchiyama's words, is "to bring the game closer to the series than ever before." It's something easily noticed after a few moments of play. For the first time, characters can fly around like in the cartoon, as well as teleport behind their opponent and lock ki



blasts in a button-mashing exercise of endurance. Storing up enough ki will also enable punishing final moves, semiscrapped barrages of offense that are "filmed" just the way they are in the anime—complete with action lines and extreme close-up facial shots.

The story mode, called *Dragon Universe* this time, is also closer to the anime's loopy story. In a system not entirely unlike the world map in *GBA's DBZ: The Legacy of Goku II*, *Dragon Universe* lets your chosen character fly around Earth (or Namek) in search of

power-ups, Dragon Balls, or just plain trouble. Win your fights, and you'll earn experience and the ability to customize your fighter to your tastes. Even better, if you follow the original anime's story while doing all this—using a Super Spirit Bomb to defeat Kid Buu with Goku, for example—you'll unlock stuff such as voice clips and anime openings. Cute touch. ☺

GAME SAYS → You can do virtually everything they show on television in this game. except jump that is.

→ HOW HOT... ★★★★

CALL OF DUTY

UNITED OFFENSIVE

EXPANSION PACK

"FEELS LIKE THE BEST
OF BATTLEFIELD 1942
AND CALL OF DUTY
COMBINED."

—GameSpy



15 new single-player missions,
as seen through the eyes of American,
British and Russian soldiers.



New weapons, including flamethrowers,
deployable machine guns, and the ability
to call in artillery strikes.



11 new multiplayer maps and
3 new modes, with vehicle combat
including tanks and jeeps!

EXPANSION PACK TO THE 2003 GAME OF THE YEAR



Blood
Mild Language
Violence



gray
matter
STUDIOS



WWW.CALLOFDUTY.COM



CALL OF DUTY™
TO PLAY

ACTIVISION

activision.com

© 2003 Activision, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark and Call of Duty, United Offensive are trademarks of Activision, Inc. All rights reserved. Game™ is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. This product contains software technology licensed from Microsoft Corporation, Intel Technology, and Bethesda Softworks, Inc. The tag logo is a registered trademark of the Electronic Arts Software Division. PC CD-ROM logo™ and TM ESRM 2003. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.

RELEASE | NOVEMBER

VIEWTUFUL JOE 2

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

SYSTEM: GCNPS2 DEVELOPER: CAPCOM DESIGNER: CLOVER STUDIO



→ The original Red Hot Man is back for more neo-2D escapades, this time with his ladyfriend Silvia, who's available as a playable character from the get-go. More interesting is the ability to play as both Joe and Silvia simultaneously in a sweet new co-op mode.



Back when we determined 2003's Most Radical Games (GMR #15), Capcom's *Viewtiful Joe* took home the awards for Action Game of the Year and GameCube Game of the Year, and it was also the runner-up for the overall Game of the Year award, with only the superb *Knights of the Old Republic* beating it out. Not too shabby for Joe's first leading role.

While the original features fast action, pristine control, cerebral boss fights, and spiffy special effects, *Viewtiful Joe 2* offers...pretty much the

same thing, only more of it. The major changes are the additions of Joe's brassy blonde girlfriend Silvia and a Replay effect: Activating this new power "records" Joe or Silvia's last action, then repeats it three times for triple the effect. Naturally, many of the environmental puzzles and enemy encounters are designed around this move, either performed on its own or in concert with Joe's other powers, such as Mach Speed and Zoom. In one example, in order to get over a giant wall, Joe must activate a switch

that drops a block onto a trapdoor. But one block isn't big enough to get Joe over the wall—the trapdoor will eventually open, and the block will drop down onto the spikes below and be crushed. So by using Replay, Joe punches the switch three times, dropping three blocks, thereby building a sufficient ladder. Though Joe and Silvia play essentially the same way, there is one key difference: Silvia lacks an effective punch, instead opting for a blast from her gun, which makes her a long-range threat

(slowing down while shooting also makes the energy blast grow, inflicting more damage).

Based on what we've played so far, *Viewtiful Joe 2* doesn't appear to deviate far from the original: It has plenty of 'ems to beat up, uses special effects to manipulate the game, and offers satisfyingly difficult boss battles. This is a good thing. ■■

GMA SAYS → What was one of the finest action games ever is now a franchise. Thus, we are happy.

→ HOW HOT... 🌟🌟🌟🌟

IT TAKES A REAL TRIGGER TO MAKE A REAL SHOOTER.

TIME CRISIS CRISIS ZONE

Amalgamate

turnovers in the only game with an unlockable option

of firing two Guncon 2 guns at once.

000000 /

+

Break interactive environments with a hail of bullets - objects explode and glass shatters.

Unlock bonus game modes plus weapons including laser gun, flamethrower, missile launcher and more.

BRING ARCADE ACTION HOME WITH DUAL GUNCON[®]2 FIREPOWER.



GUNCON2



PlayStation 2

namco
www.namco.com



©2006 NAMCO GAMES, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. NAMCO LTD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners.

Join the Next Movement

All players are not created equal. Some big men look for the open 19-footer, others crash the boards like a wrecking ball with an afro. That's what Next Movement with IsoMotion[™] technology is all about. Every player performs with the same skills and style as he does in real life, which makes ESPN NBA 2K5 the most complete, most authentic NBA video game you can buy. Check out ESPN NBA 2K5... and let the Next Movement begin.

**"...the most complete
hoops game on the market."**

-IGN.com



PlayStation 2



XBOX LIVE

SEGA

Sega is registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Sega and the Sega logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Sega Corporation © SEGA CORPORATION, 2004. All rights reserved. The NBA and individual NBA member team identifications used on or in this product are trademarks, copyrights, designs and other forms of intellectual property of NBA Properties, Inc. and the respective NBA member teams and may not be used, in whole or in part, without the prior written consent of NBA Properties, Inc. © 2004 NBA Properties, Inc. All rights reserved. ESPN is a trademark of ESPN Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Online play requires internet connection, Network Adaptor (for PlayStation 2) and Memory Card (for PlayStation 2) (each sold separately). The Xbox logo is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, Xbox Live logo and Xbox logos are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. XBOX LIVE is a trademark of ESPN, Inc. ESPN is a trademark of ESPN, Inc. ESPN is a trademark of ESPN, Inc. © 2004 Sega Corporation. © 2004 Sega, Inc.



\$19.99

espnvideogames.com

ESPN  **2K5**

NBA.COM

RELEASE | OCTOBER

CLOSE COMBAT: FIRST TO FIGHT

BE A MARINE WITHOUT THE SAND AND NUTRITION WAFERS

Developer: **PC200** Publisher: **GAMERING** Designer: **DESTINEER**



→ Not only does *First to Fight* look sweet, but it plays well, too. Too bad *Full Spectrum Warrior* came out first. Oof!



Until fairly recently, console folk were perfectly satisfied with first-person shooters that did the same things PC FPSes did a few years ago—straight-out, mindless alien massacring. Games like *Halo* and *The Chronicles of Riddick* changed all this, though, and *First to Fight* (assuming the gaming public can wrap its mind around it) could mark a new era of complexity for the genre.

You could mistake *First to Fight* for yet another first-person shooter—you've got the gun on the bottom, some

kind of goofy heads-up display up top, and the occasional hapless Middle Eastern guy being gunned down in the middle. But this is more of an action game than *Full Spectrum Warrior*, its closest relative. There's a Fire button and everything. However, this is far removed from your typical arcade game. You play the leader of a four-man team of Marines, and your primary job is to keep the crew alive with a mixture of straight shooting and quick orders (sent out with a thumbstick-controlled radial menu.

Dealing with the enemy requires careful teamwork. Say you want to enter a room that you believe contains several hostiles. You can order a room takeover—this stacks up your men by the entrance, and they storm in when you issue the "Go" command, hunting down cover and getting multiple angles of fire on each enemy, even if there's a fellow Marine in front of them. The whole process is like watching policemen break into a crack house on Cops—the idea is to scare the enemy to death, which is easier to

pull off than actually filling them full of machine-gun rounds.

It sounds complicated, but the interface, which combines gunfire with combat orders, ensures that things move quickly. Some touch-up work remains to be done on the graphics, but the potential is there for a military simulator that doesn't put the action gamer to sleep. **B+**

GMA SAYS → What'll this game case from? Well, when *Full Spectrum Warrior* and *Rainbow Six 3* loved each other very, very much.

→ HOW HOT...



LIVE THE LIFE

PLAYBOY
THE MANSION



PLAYHEF.COM

GET THE GAME AT:

PC GAMES
electronicarts boutique

GameStop

PLAYBOYSTORE.COM

SOUNDTRACK ALSO AVAILABLE!

PLAYING PENDING
RP
RATED BY ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org
for updated rating
information.

PC
CD-ROM
SOFTWARE

X
XBOX



PlayStation 2

crush

CYBERLORE



RELEASE | SEPTEMBER

WARHAMMER 40,000: DAWN OF WAR

BECAUSE VIDEOGAMES ARE COOLER THAN MINIATURES

DIVISION PC DEVELOPER THQ DEVELOPER RELIC



Chances are, you're either one of those people who stays up until the wee hours of the morning painting your pewter Warhammer miniatures to perfection or you're one of the people who doesn't understand those wackos. Whatever the case, you're all about to be united by a common interest: Games Workshop's Warhammer 40,000 miniatures line is the subject of THQ's upcoming real-time strategy magnum opus, *Warhammer 40,000: Dawn of War*. While many RTS games

shamelessly copy successful conventions from Blizzard's and Microsoft's respective RTS libraries, *Dawn of War* looks to be a fresh, exciting adventure for even the most jaded strategy enthusiast.

First and foremost, the most gripping aspect of *Dawn of War* is its graphical quality: This is quite possibly the best-looking RTS we've ever seen. The game's foreboding, postapocalyptic environments are expansive and well detailed, and unlike many other games in this

genre, everything is built to a very realistic-looking scale. The character models are also top-notch, and you can use the in-game camera to zoom in on any unit or location to a ridiculous level of detail—and as anyone who's into Warhammer will tell you, it's all about the details.

Aesthetic achievements aside, *Dawn of War*'s gameplay has an awful lot going for it. Players will be able to choose from four different factions, all taken from the Warhammer tabletop games: space

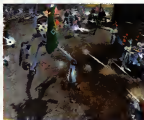
marines, chaos, orks, and the eldar. The space marines are your basic outstanding military force, while the chaos forces comprise a demonic army of the damned. Orks are a melee-focused group of war-mongering behemoths, and the eldar are a physically fragile people who excel in the use of ranged firearms.

No matter which side you choose, you're in for a fight—and the key word here is "fight." *Dawn of War* eschews the typically dull resource-gathering chores of traditional RTS games;

INCOMING GAMES

WARHAMMER 40,000: DAWN OF WAR

» NEXT



→ All of the units Warhammer fans are familiar with have made it into the game. Playing as the four diverse races provides unique gaming experiences, depending on your level of skill. OK, then. Time to put the little men in their places.



instead, opposing armies will battle to secure various control points on the game map that grant requisition points to the controlling party. The more control points you own, the more resources you'll have available to improve your army—which means you'll spend more time fighting and less time worrying about how many farms you need to build.

Combat is epic and bloody; you'll march squads of units around the map, seeking out your rivals' control points and contesting his hold on them. These

battles do, naturally, require some finesse at micromanagement—but with fewer resource-related matters to keep track of, it's much easier to focus on the fights. And once you gain access to some of the game's more powerful creatures—such as a hellish chaos demon, who takes to impaling enemy units on his blade and tossing their lifeless bodies aside like bloody rag dolls—you'll be in for some extremely intense action.

It's worth noting that Dawn of War isn't a hard-and-fast conversion of

the Warhammer tabletop rules—Relic has taken a few liberties with the way combat works, though it has made every attempt to stay true to the original source material. The company seems to have done a great job so far, and it shows: By all indications, this just might be the RTS to watch for in 2004. **B+**

GMA SAYS → If you ask us, this game looks primed to become the next StarCraft caliber RTS. And to think that we used to laugh at all those guys who hand-paint their Warhammer miniatures...

→ HOW HOT...



WHAT IS WARHAMMER 40,000?

→ The tabletop Warhammer game has actually been around for quite a few years. Developed and produced by Games Workshop, the game involves armies of intricate pewter miniatures on a battlefield of prebuilt dioramic terrain and obstacles. Players take turns waging war on one another, adhering to a system of complex rules. Many Warhammer fanatics amass and hand-paint a large collection of miniatures, which we're told involves a considerable amount of time and money. Warhammer 40,000: Dawn of War was designed to allow gamers to experience the tabletop game's detailed battles, albeit without much of the overhead investment. It might not follow the traditional Warhammer rules exactly to the letter, but Dawn of War is certainly easier on your wallet. **B+**



**Alone, you are mighty.
Together, you are legends.**
—Professor Charles Xavier

Visit x-men-legends.com



PlayStation 2



MARVEL

NINTENDO
GAMECUBE

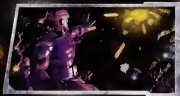
ACTIVISION

activision.com

MARVEL, X-MEN, and all Marvel characters and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc., and are used with permission. Copyright © 2004. All rights reserved. www.marvel.com. Published by Activision Publishing, Inc. Game Boy Advance, the Game Boy Advance logo and Game Boy Advance are registered trademarks of Activision, Inc. All rights reserved. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries. TM, ® and the Nintendo GameCube logo are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2004 Nintendo. Nokia and N-Gage are trademarks or registered trademarks of Nokia Corporation. The n-gage.com is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the properties of their respective owners.



Strategically recruit and upgrade your team of 4 mutants from a cast of 15 playable X-Men™.



Traverse a new X-Men action/RPG with an arsenal of superpowers.

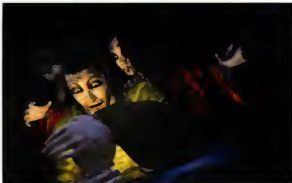


Join the action with up to 4 players at once in multiplayer skirmish and co-op modes.



X-MEN LEGENDS™

AVAILABLE NOW*



RELEASE | OCTOBER

KUONO FANCY DRESS AND LOW-DOWN HORROR

Developer PS2 Developer AGETEC Designer FROM SOFTWARE

The new horror theme is official: Haunted houses aren't enough—you need to give people a haunted village these days. Tecmo did it, *M. Night Shyamalan* did it, and now From Software is doing it with *Kuono*, which translates roughly to "The Nine Curses."

Set in the town of Kyoto during the Heian era, *Kuono* takes a look at the world of the *onryō*, a particularly Japanese breed of exorcist. When Doman, a master *onryō*, goes missing during a job, he's pursued by a young woman and man: Utsuki, whom you control during the "yin" phase, is Doman's daughter, while Sakuya, whose section of the game makes up the "yang" phase, is one of Doman's disciples. Once you finish both sections of the game, the final *Kuono* phase of the game begins, in which you take control of master exorcist Abe no Seimei.

All of the characters have to navigate the town's streets and mansions by night and fend off the advances of traditional Japanese demons, and those aren't the only

aspects where the Heian flavor comes through. The weapons you wield are authentic to the period, as are the formal dress, hairstyles, and makeup that the characters wear. The music, too, incorporates traditional taiko drums and children's hymns, making for a spooky, atmospheric sound as you wander the streets, plus you have the option to choose the original Japanese language track with subtitles to complete the mood.

One thing that's not 100 percent true to life is *Kuono*'s magic system. Weapons are handy, but the most effective way to fight off the demons in Kyoto is to use the cards you find to summon one of 12 creatures you can acquire.

AgeTec's localization is striving to keep the game as true to the original as possible, and nothing in *Kuono* will be cut or censored. Look for the game this October 26, before it finds you first. **B+**

GMA SAYS → *Warren's* *Arise*: Evil, *Slant* *Hill*, and *Fatal Frame* enough? Guess not, as evidenced by the looks of *Slant* and *Kuono*.

→ HOW HOT... **B+**

RELEASE | OCTOBER

FATAL FRAME 2: DIRECTOR'S CUT PUT IT IN THE JAR

Director XB Developer TECMO Designer TECMO

The first-person view is a popular device for horror games these days: *Silent Hill 4* uses it to good effect by always making the player feel as if there is something behind him that he can't quite see, and now *Fatal Frame 2* is giving it a shot—no pun intended.

Just as the first *Fatal Frame* got a second life on Xbox, now *Fatal Frame 2* is rising from the dead in an unkillable zombie form. The development team hasn't been idle in the meantime; it has added a bunch of new modes, such as the aforementioned first-person view where the camera is locked to, well, the camera. By playing the entire game through the viewfinder of the mysterious Camera Obscura, the team hopes to induce an even more claustrophobic feel as you battle the evil spirits of All God's Village in a quest to save your trance-addled twin sister.

If you get bored of playing through the main plot, whether in third person or first, there are other enticements: Survival mode is a sort of minigame in which you struggle to get through the village while facing unusually deadly ghosts—one hit from the lowest spirit means "game over" here. There are also things to unlock, including art galleries and alternate costumes, some of which channel the spirits of past Tecmo games like *Dead or Alive* and *Deception*.

The traditional time for these sorts of games to come out is around Halloween, and Tecmo is honoring that tradition with a planned October 17 release. Boo to you, too. **B+**

GMA SAYS → The PS2 version was tight, but the Xbox version wears tighter pants.

→ HOW HOT... **B+**

“We have SOLID
proof of their
weapons of mass
destruction.”

- October 16, 1962



WWW.METALGEARSOLID.COM



Visit www.esrb.org
for updated rating
information.

KONAMI

RELEASE | NOVEMBER

MIDNIGHT CLUB 3: DUB EDITION

PIMPIN': EASIER THAN YOU THINK

DEVELOPER PS2/XBOX360
PUBLISHER ROCKSTAR
DEVELOPER ROCKSTAR



→ The streets are alive with the sound of music, and some phat bass, and some serious horses under the hood. Turbocharged and rammed to go, this winter will be a heated contest between MC3 and NFS:UG. Woof!

As Vietnam is to first-person shooters, car customization is to racing games. The current obsession with being able to adjust almost every aspect of your virtual ride dominates the genre, especially this holiday season. We've already seen Namco's *Street Racing Syndicate* give it an admirable (but flawed) shot, and *Midnight Club 3: Dub Edition* are all being released within the next few months.

How do you separate yourself from the competition when everybody

has rear spoilers, gold rims, tweakable car physics, and a token race queen? Rockstar believes it's by aligning with *DUB* magazine, a publication dedicated to the high-end modifications that 99.9 percent of car lovers simply can't afford. That, and the confidence that since the *Midnight Club* series arguably ignited this nation's love affair with video street racing, Rockstar is the best company to improve on the genre.

Each of the three cities in MC3 has a special relevance to the racing world:

San Diego is the hot spot for street racing, Atlanta is popular for exhibitions of outlandish modifications (the kids call it "pimpin' the ride"), and Detroit, well, is the birthplace of the automobile. As was the case in the previous *Midnight Clubs*, cities are rearranged to create numerous race paths and impromptu shortcuts.

DUB Edition doesn't seem to alter the *Midnight Club* way of doing things too significantly. Races are still somewhat free-form, with multiple routes guided by general checkpoints

placed about the city. Both chopper and crotch-rocket bikes are back and seem faster than before. One improvement we noticed during our hands-on time is the removal of MCZ's awkward change of camera angle whenever a jump is made. The key differences will be the customization options and giving people the experience they otherwise couldn't afford. ☛

GMA SAYS → In such a crowded field of street racers, it will be interesting to see who places where.

→ HOW HOT...



Katamari 塊魂 Damacy™



**The rolling, sticking, never-stopping,
ever-swelling clump of stuff that makes
a star out of everyone and everything.**

When the King of All Cosmos accidentally destroys all the stars in the sky, he orders you, his pint-sized princely son, to put the twinkle back in the heavens above. How, you ask? By rolling everything and anything on Earth into clumps, so he can replace what's missing in space.



Featuring object-collecting
gameplay mechanics of mesmerizing
simplicity and absurdity.



Go from rolling along a tabletop to ravaging
through city streets, picking up momentum
and skyscrapers along the way.



Two-player battle mode lets
you compete in a race to grow the
biggest ball of stuff.



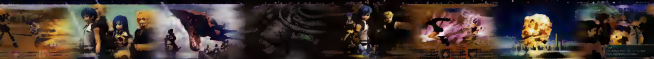
PlayStation 2

namco
www.namco.com

LIGHT TRAVELS AT A SPEED OF 299,792,458 METERS PER SECOND.

YOU AREN'T QUITE THAT FAST.

IT'S A BIG UNIVERSE. BETTER GET STARTED.



A MASSIVE ADVENTURE SPANNING TWO DVDS.

PlayStation 2

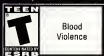


STAR OCEAN

Till the End of Time™



The year is SD 772. Fayt's vacation on the peaceful world of Hyda is shattered when an unknown military force attacks. Separated from all he knows and loves, Fayt must brave the galaxy to recover what he has lost.



SQUARE ENIX™

www.square-enix-usa.com
Published by Square Enix U.S.A., Inc.



© 2005, 2006 by Area for 222889F (RMC) CD 100. All Rights Reserved. STAR OCEAN: TILL THE END OF TIME™, SQUARE ENIX™, and the SQUARE ENIX logo are trademarks of Square Enix Co., Ltd. "TEEN", "T", "Blood", and the Blood V logo are trademarks of Disney Interactive. "PlayStation" and the PS Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.

SQUARE ENIX™
MOBILE

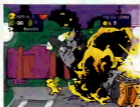
WWW.SQEXM.COM

RELEASE | NOVEMBER

ALIEN HOMINID

MORE THAN A FLASH IN THE PAN

Clayton Kopp / Sony2 Dave Cohen / G-3 Chris G. Jones / The Bitmap Brothers



→ We love the little alien dude. We love little alien dudes in general, so that explains a lot of things. Don't hate us.



➔ Internet crazies love their little conspiracy theories. Especially the one about how Sony really does destroy classic 2D gaming once and for all by blocking the U.S. release of games like *Metal Slug 3*.

Never mind if *Alien Hominid* is coming to PS2—a hand-drawn 2D shooter that plays like a deranged cousin to SNK's classic. But here, you control an extraterrestrial invader mowing down human forces with reckless abandon, rather than the other way around. And that can mean

only one thing to the tinfol hat types: Sony is in cahoots with aliens.

So while they scurry to the store for extra Reynolds Wrap, the rest of us can look forward to some quality old-school action.

Alien Hominid is definitely the best-looking *Slug* clone on the block. An angular, cartoonish style permeates the game—the animation is choppy but incredibly varied. Control is tight, and the influence of classic 2D action games such as *Contra* and *Strider 2* is plain to see in the giant bosses and

tricky gimmicks that challenge the player in rapid succession.

Alien Hominid is a first: a free Flash download so good that it was expanded into a console release. The game's amateur roots still show at times, though. It's crazy hard, and the challenge tends to be of the unfair variety. Enemies fire off shots without warning, and their tiny bullets often vanish entirely behind smoke or scenery. Spending nearly as much time dying as killing is traditional with this type of game, but it's never as

much fun when you're not sure why you just bit the dust.

Still, the game has heart. With a little more tweaking, *Alien Hominid* could be just the thing that famished retro-gamers need. And even if the game really is a tool for some sort of space-monster takeover, at least we'll have something interesting to play during work breaks in the alien salt mines. **B+**

GMA SAYS → *Hominid* follows in the *Contra* vein of action and to us that's a good thing

→ HOW HOT...



ATV 3 Offroad Fury

BLAZE YOUR OWN TRAIL

THE COMPETITION IS FIERCE. The finish line lies just up the mountain, and all six competitors have a legitimate shot as they cross the wide-open environment. As you guide your all-terrain vehicle onward and upward, the fog builds up and begins to cloud your vision. You don't care, though—victory looms closer by the second, and you can taste it. There it is! The finish line. If you can just execute this last jump effectively—maybe even bust out a trick just for style—the win is yours. But then...

WHAM!

Out of nowhere, you feel the jolt of another rider from behind. The result: a spectacular crash. Unfortunately, you're part of it. As your position resets, you watch someone else cross the finish line. Tough luck. You're not totally bummed, though. Actually, "awed" is more like it. "That was one awesome crash," you tell the other five players via your USB headset. "Let's play again."

It's all par for the course in *ATV Offroad Fury 3*, the latest offering in Sony Computer Entertainment America's acclaimed racing series. Developer Climax has created more than 30 new free-roaming environments for this sequel, including terrain types as diverse as snow, dirt, mud, ice, water and grass. Impress your opponents by mastering all 34 freestyle tricks, or wow them with your customized vehicle and rider. If you're up for a break from hardcore racing, try one of the eight minigames, from King of the Hill and Tag to Soccer and Basketball.

ATV 3's offline play remains as strong as ever? but the game really shines online. Got a few buddies you play with regularly? Then join a clan. And don't forget to check the Scoreboard to see how it stacks up against all of the other ones. Of course, you can also view your own personal accomplishments there. After all, barring a few unforeseen collisions, you're bound to accomplish quite a bit.



PlayStation 2



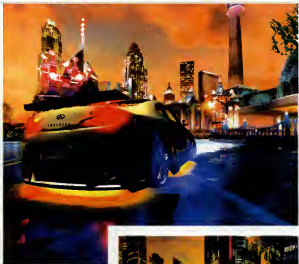
LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.

RELEASE | NOVEMBER

NEED FOR SPEED UNDERGROUND 2

RIP ROARIN'. ROOTIN' TOOTIN'

Developer: EA GAMES/EA
Publisher: EA
Distributor: EA CANADA



→ In typical EA fashion, the sequel is a trillion times deeper than the original. NBA Street Vol. 2 had it, Def Jam Fight for NY has it, and *Need for Speed Underground 2* is better: It lets us love to race, and we'll race you online in NFSU2. Traffic tickets, what? Didn't think so.



➔ Fan requests went a long way in guiding the design of *Need for Speed Underground 2*. Yeah, the game is bigger and better, but the biggest change is the No. 1 fan request: an open, connected world to explore and drive in, à la *GTA*.

NFSU2 has five times more the amount of drivable track than the original (125 miles versus 25 miles). A freeway system links the city core through five neighborhoods—it's so complex, in fact, that the game features a GPS system. As you play,

you gradually open up the full city, and exploration of alleyways and off-the-beaten path routes lead to hidden stuff. "Everything you can see, you can drive to," promises Associate Producer Greg Uhler.

Career mode features Brooke Burke (see Talent, GMR #20), who voices the role of Rachel, the liaison to the underground racing league. Unlike in *NFSU*, you decide which races to participate in, so you aren't stuck doing race styles you don't like. Once you're in a race, you can pull off moves such

as powerslides and getting air to fill your nitrous meter, and a new replay mode allows you to relive your glory—or humiliations.

Not all the races are organized: You engage outrun mode by driving up to any other car on the street, at which point the lead car determines the course of the race. To win, you need to get a 300-meter lead on the loser.

EA upped the car ante, too. Last year's array of 20 cars has been expanded to 30. With 4,000 parts for customization, the options for tricking

out your rig are mind-boggling: scissor doors, spinners, split hoods, neon rims, wide body kits—you name it.

Car physics have been tweaked to be more realistic and less arcadey, and your rides have much more "slide" to them than they did last year. Best news of all for competitive types: The PS2, Xbox, and PC versions of the game all feature online play. 🚗

GMA SAYS → Maybe it's Brooke Burke, but we're really looking forward to this game.

➔ HOW HOT... 🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟

Get Hooked Today!



Available September 2004 at Most Major Retailers



XBOX
LIVE



PlayStation 2

GAME BOY ADVANCE

ACTIVISION



©2004 Activision Publishing, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Published and distributed by Activision Publishing, Inc. and its affiliates. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. All rights reserved. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Live Logo and the Xbox Logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. TM, ® and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. ©2001 Nintendo.

THIS IS TOTAL WAR.



A 21ST CENTURY LOOK AT ANCIENT BATTLES
WATCH FRIDAYS 8PM/7C

DECISIVE
BATTLES



THE BATTLEFIELD



www.totalwar.com



ACTIVISION

activision.com

Total War Software © 2005-2006 The Creative Assembly Limited. Total War, Creative Assembly and the Total War logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of The Creative Assembly Limited in the United Kingdom and/or other countries. Published by Activision Publishing, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. All rights reserved. PC CD-ROM logo TM and © 2005. The CW logo TM and the "The CW" logo are TM and service marks of The CW Network, Inc. All rights reserved. The "PlayStation 3" logo and the "PS3" logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft and the "Xbox" logo are registered trademarks and service marks of Microsoft Corporation. The "Powered by Animate!" logo and the "Animate!" logo are trademarks of Animate! Studios, Inc. The "Total War" logo is a registered trademark of The Entertainment Software Association. All other trademarks and trade names are the property of their respective owners.

ROME

TOTAL WAR



Drive your legion into history as you lead one of eleven old-world armies in epic, real-time cinematic battles.



Forge an empire on the revolutionary 3D campaign map with an intuitive display of your cities and armies.



Command unique units, from Carthaginian elephants and Scythian war chariots to Roman war dogs, using pick-up-and-play controls.



RELEASE | NOVEMBER

THE URBZ: SIMS IN THE CITY

THE CITY NEVER SLEEPS

CREATOR: GAMESBOT CREATOR: GAMESBOT CREATOR: GAMESBOT



→ Each district has a bouncer-protected party room (above, left) that you can enter only at midnight if you have the right clothes and rep to get in. Once there, you can obtain Power Social moves, such as the Spit Trick (right), from Darius, the king of the City. These footpool social skills win friends like magic!



▶ If you're expecting *The Urbz* to be *The Sims* meets *Vice City*, you're missing the point. "It's not super street cool; it's more a parody," explains Lead Designer Michael McCormick. Seems the Sims have simply left suburbia, but a new graphics engine, a soundtrack by The Black Eyed Peas, and the urban trappings do give the game a slicker, less pedestrian vibe.

Each city district has a group of denizens to befriend and a career associated with it. The biggest gameplay change is that you don't

send your Sim off to work and wait for his return; you control him 24/7. Fashion models pursue their dream in Diamond Heights, while gearheads eke out a living in Gasoline Row, stripping bikes at the chop shop. Each career has a minigame involving hitting the right buttons at the right time, but you still have to increase your rep among your compatriots, as well as work on the appropriate skill and keep your motive meters filled.

Some elements from *Bustin' Out* are even more streamlined. The

Comfort and Room motives have been eliminated, leaving players to worry only about Bladder, Hygiene, Hunger, Fun, and Sleep. Once on the job, you have to worry about only three issues based on your profession—for example, a sushi chef must make sushi, keep the restaurant neat, and be clean. There are also side quests, which you can do to earn even more dough for spending on cool threads or fixing up your pad.

Making friends with NPCs is a focal point. If you go to midnight parties, you

can get footpool Power Social moves. But you have to wear the right clothes and have the right rep to get in. PS2 players can also use the EyeToy to put their picture in the game, and as their rep increases, their picture will appear around the city. Once you've made it big time, you get the keys to a fabulous penthouse pad—along with some other rewards, no doubt. **B+**

GMA SAYS → Something about this feels cheesy, but we're keeping an open mind.

→ HOW HOT... ★ ★ ★



GET 'EM AT

EVERYWHERE AND ANYWHERE. THE NEW ROLL-TOP COLLECTION

CHAMPS
SPORTS

WHERE SPORT LIVES

© 2007 Timberland Group, Inc. All rights reserved. Timberland, the Timberland tree logo, and the Roll-Top logo are trademarks of Timberland Group, Inc. in the U.S. and other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. In Canada, please contact Timberland Group, Inc. at 1-800-387-2377.



WHERE SPORT LIVES

EVERYWHERE AND ANYWHERE. THE NEW ROLL-TOP COLLECTION

CHAMPS
SPORTS

GET 'EM AT

RELEASE | NOVEMBER

TAIKO DRUM MASTER

WE GOT THE BEAT

COVERED PS2 DREAMCAST NAMCO DEVELOPER NAMCO



→ Drums were the earliest form of music. The cavemen did it, and Tom Byron does it. He bangs crap all day in hopes we'll pay attention to him. Sometimes it works, other times we just close the door to his office. We're going to get here this game, cuz it's good.



➔ The most popular game you haven't played yet is almost undoubtedly *Taiko Drum Master*. The Japanese edition, already up to its fourth installment, has sold more than 2 million copies. In fact, its popularity inspired Nintendo to create *Donkey Konga* (reviewed on page 130). Not bad for a game starring a couple of cute smiley-faced drums.

Just a few years ago, special-controller music games were the biggest trend across the ocean. *Taiko Drum Master* is a little late, but since

it's deceptively simple and much more fun than many of its predecessors, it's managed to result in a new wave of music mania.

The titular taiko is a type of traditional drum used mainly in Japanese summer festivals. With two fat plastic drumsticks, you smack the center or the edge of the taiko's wide surface as the onscreen indicators pass over a certain point. The rhythm is mesmerizing, and playing with another person can result in an infectious collaboration.

Though you might expect traditional Japanese music, *Taiko Drum Master* mostly takes the pop route. With hits such as "Love Shack," "Maternal Girl," and "Lady Marmalade" to bang away to, it's a much better party-game candidate than you might expect. There's also some bombastic classical music, like Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony," which works surprisingly well. To round out the collection, some Namco music, including a song from the excellent *Katamari Damacy* soundtrack, appears.

It's not entirely about music, either. Several creative, competitive minigames based on hitting the drum in time offer a welcome diversion. Just get a bunch of friends, a couple of taikos, and a few mixers. Play it between rounds of *Karaoke Revolution*, and your parties should be jumping with musical exuberance, if little actual Japanese culture. **B+**

GMA SAYS → It's so fun that it's stupid and it's so stupid that it's hilarious. Expect to see a GMA Taiko competition.

→ HOW HOT...



BLOOD WILL TELL BLOOD, GUTS, AND MUCH MORE TO WIN BACK

Directed by PS2 | Developed by SEGA | Released on RED/SEGA NOW

The first two levels of *Blood Will Tell* are presented in black and white, complete with a bumper announcing that "there's nothing wrong with your TV." In part, this is a nod to its roots in monochrome '60s-vintage animation, but it works in a gameplay context as well. One of the first rewards for defeating one of the 48 boss monsters is the chance to see the world in color.

That's when the samurai hero Hyakkimaru regains his left eye, one of the 48 bits and pieces of his body stolen away by 48 demons. Regaining each of those organs helps boost his fighting abilities and grants him special skills, some of which we take for granted in most games.

Ideas like that are what will hopefully make *Blood Will Tell* more than the straightforward hack-'n-slash it seemed to be a year ago. It's come a long way since then, adding a more complex hand-to-hand fighting system—each of a wide selection of swords develops with experience and possesses unique bonus attributes—and a bit more focus for Hyakkimaru's A.I. sidekick, Dororo, the teenage thief who was this story's namesake in its original

form, can back up Hyakkimaru in combat, search for hidden items and exits, or grab power-ups around the battlefield to save his partner the effort.

Some of those battlefields are roughly linear, but just as often they're wide, expansive areas that need to be cleared of demons. In the same way, the quality of the opposition ramps up—early on, the fiends are a little weedy and generic, but once the game gets in gear, it unleashes some genuinely skin-crawling horrors inspired by Japanese folklore. Blending free movement with a focused presentation for boss encounters, the camera keeps up, although some of the bigger, more active fiends strain the perspective at key moments.

Plenty of action games have said "collect all these widgets" without offering a particularly good reason why. *Blood Will Tell*, on the other hand, is quite the inventive collect-a-thon—with luck, it'll stay strong through all 48 fiends. **B+**

SMR SAYS → Cats, stars, and jiggos not fun to collect. Hyakkimaru's friends fun to collect in a noisy, Midcore kind of way.

→ HOW HOT...



- ▶ Reviews
- ▶ Advice
- ▶ Ratings

Make Smarter Buying
Decisions Faster



1

Visit pcmag.com

2

Click on Product Guides

Find the latest products and the hot sellers – from digital cameras and cell phones to laptops and pdas. Read a product overview, check out the pros and cons, read our editors' evaluations and member ratings.

3

Compare Products
and Prices



Get the most out of 1UP.com!

It's where gamers who live to play get what they need to succeed: The best news, reviews, previews, screen shots and cheats. Plus, on 1UP you can build your own community of gamers to share tips, tactics and even success stories.

>THE BEST GAME COVERAGE

The screenshot shows the 1UP.com website interface for a Halo 2 article. Red arrows point to several key features:

- Navigation:** Home, Platforms, Magazines, Games, Socialize, Games, Create, Quizzes.
- Search:** A search bar with a dropdown menu showing "Show off your game collection on a 1UPUP page."
- Article Content:** The main article titled "Halo 2" by Dan Meo, dated 03/23/04. The text discusses the game's reception and the author's experience.
- Related Content:** A sidebar titled "PEOPLE WHO OWN THIS GAME" listing other Halo titles and user avatars.
- User Interaction:** A "User Hype" section with a "Write Your Own Hype!" button and a list of user comments.

MORE CONTENT

From your favorite editors.

MORE OPTIONS

Than any other game site.

MORE SCREENS

Than we have place for in print.

MORE ROOM

For longer, in-depth stories.

MORE OPINION

From gamers just like you.



1UP Partners:





Win prizes at 1UP
Games, rigs, and more!
>contests.1UP.com

Enter 1UP's Mobile
Game Tournament!
Text ONEUP T8 to 66236 or
visit >lup.mo2do.com

>INTERACT WITH OTHER GAMERS

Carrie Shepherd
"carrie"

Carrie's Desktop Picture

Carrie's Journal

Carrie's Games

Collection	Tracked Games	Wish List	Value		
USA (1)	SUP Rank	Trade	Play Online	Expert	Value
497	76	N	N	N	\$27.00
MicroGames (2)	SUP Rank	Trade	Play Online	Expert/Value	
34	76	N	N	N	\$12.00
OC (3)	SUP Rank	Trade	Play Online	Expert/Value	
627	76	N	N	N	\$18.00
PS2 (1)	SUP Rank	Trade	Play Online	Expert/Value	
300	76	N	N	N	\$20.00
TOTAL VALUE OF COLLECTION: \$63					

YOUR PAGE
With your own
unique 1UP URL.

YOUR FACE
Or other image, if
you're shy.

YOUR FRIENDS
Who share common
interests.

YOUR BLOG
To talk about games
and more.

YOUR GAMES
To show off that
huge collection.



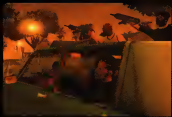
>Find gamers just like you @ 1UP.com 



ROCKSTAR GAMES
PRESENTS

grand theft auto San Andreas™

A ROCKSTAR NORTH
PRODUCTION



COMING SOON
TO PLAYSTATION®2

WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/SANANDREAS



PlayStation®2



Visit www.esrb.org
for updated rating
information.



➔ Historians won't remember 2004 for the presidential election, the Olympics, or even Janet Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction" at the Super Bowl.

No, 2004 will be remembered as the year of the first-person shooter. Never before have so many legendary shooter franchises delivered sequels in such a short space of time. *Doom 3*, *Half-Life 2*, *Metroid Prime 2*, and *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent* will cause gamers to be so busy, they'll barely have time to argue about which title is best. If *Duke Nukem Forever* were here to celebrate the occasion, we'd have a full house.

But anticipation for *Halo 2* towers above the rest. Maybe it's because the original *Halo* is still the biggest Xbox title to date. Maybe it's because of Bungie's dedication to delivering top-notch solo and networked play. Or maybe it's because gamers are just looking forward to new environments in which to blow Warthogs sky-high. Whatever the case, November 9 will make a Japanese *Dragon Quest* release day look tame. Geeks will line up for blocks after calling in sick to work or school. It's going to be the big one.

Bungie has been incredibly guarded with information about the game, teasing fans with a nugget at a time. A tidbit here, an allusion there...it's all very mysterious and more than a little difficult to keep up with. That's why we've compiled a comprehensive list of everything known about the game to date in a single convenient location to save you the hassle of tracking it down yourself. ➔

(ALMOST) EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT HALO

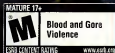
BY JEREMY PARISH

2

If it seemed like they

WERE COMING
FROM ALL SIDES
BEFORE,
try it in 3D.

No matter how cool it looks, never stop shooting.
Three dimensions. Two playable heroes. One classic franchise returns. Neo Contra. The more things change, the more they stay insane.



PlayStation 2



NEO
ONTRA™



KONAMI

www.konami.com/usa

THE MULTIPLAYER EXPERIENCE

Halo 2's big deal is networked gameplay. Three years on, the original is still considered one of the greatest multiplayer experiences ever. Bungie faces the tricky task of topping a masterpiece without straying too far from what people love about it.

Fortunately, the company has a solid track record in this area. Its sequels to *Myth* and *Marathon* both improved on already excellent originals. Bungie's approach has typically been to retain the things that work, polish them to perfection, and then add a bunch of new stuff to blow gamers' minds. Here are 10 reasons why the developers will probably do the same thing with Halo 2's multiplayer.

1. LET THERE BE LIVE

Halo 2 will offer full Xbox Live support. If Bungie added nothing else to this sequel—if Halo 2 were simply the original game in a new package but with Live play—this single addition would still be more than enough to make the game a must-have for many people.

As good as Halo's multiplayer is, comparatively few are able to enjoy the full experience. Because the game was released at the system's launch (long before the arrival of Live), anyone hoping for a quick game of capture the flag can't simply dial up and challenge random people. A match requires either squinting at a spitscreen or gathering 16 friends, 16 Xboxes, and 16 televisions, and then creating a makeshift LAN. Perhaps feasible if you live in a college dormitory (or work at Microsoft), but not so easy for the rest of us couch potatoes.

That won't be an issue with the sequel. Sixteen

participants will still be allowed to fight it out, but large-scale matches will be much more common, thanks to the wonders of broadband. LAN and spitscreen matches will still be supported, and particularly frugal gamers can even go online with three friends via spitscreen with a single Live account. But with long-distance battles available, gamers need only log on to reach out and humble a stranger.

2. STICK TOGETHER

Fortunately, you won't have to play with strangers. Bungie is well aware that facing off against random competitors will likely put you up against a socially retarded 12-year-old whose only joy in life is insulting your mother. With the robot voice.

To avoid the frustrations of blind matches, Halo 2 will allow you to team up with your friends—and more importantly, to stay with them. Once you've established a party of participants, you'll be able to move freely among the game's options en masse. You'll continue to compete with (and against) your friends until they choose to go their own way. Both clans and people with a low tolerance for morons should be pleased.

3. CLIMBING THE RANKS

Halo 2 will feature the rankings and ladders and other bits of ego stroking so important to online gaming. Bungie is eager to prevent unethical types from manipulating the rankings and climbing to renown by cheating. Anyone who's ever spent much time on Live knows that trying to force every user to play nice would be a lot like trying to stop an earthquake. With your bare hands. ➔

NOVEL AFFAIRS

➔ Since you're reading this magazine, you're clearly a person of excellent taste and, more importantly, some degree of literacy. That being the case, you may wish to check out *Del Rey's* trilogy of Halo novels. We won't pretend they're classics of Western literature or anything, but they're certainly healthier for your brain than another *Survivor* rerun marathon. And best of all, they reveal some interesting things about the Halo universe.

This books also offer a few hints about Halo 2 for the discerning reader. *Master Chief*, for example, was part of the Spartan II supersoldier program, but he was hardly alone. Though his fellow Spartans were thought to have been completely wiped out before the beginning of the first game, *First Strike* indicates that several of *Master Chief's* comrades survived and will almost certainly be pitching in to help out with the defense of Earth.

Also of interest are the Covenant's siege tactics. Normally, they simply wipe out an entire planet by "glassing" it—that is, heating the entire surface until it fuses into solid glass. The only exception is when the planet in question contains artifacts left behind by the mysterious Forerunner race; in that case, they use more conventional means to depopulate the world while trying to protect those precious relics. The Covenant obviously isn't just glassing Earth; clearly, Earth is home to important remnants of the Forerunners. What these artifacts may be and how they got here are the questions of the day.

But the most important revelation in the novels is the fact that *Master Chief's* real name is... wait for it... John. ☞



JAK 3™

CONFLICT. REVENGE. RESOLUTION.

One year ago, Jak and Daxter put their butts on the line to save Haven City from Kor and his Metal Heads. But the chaos rages on. Warring factions continue to battle. The city—even its palace—lies in shambles. And everyone blames the one guy in town with Dark Eco power. How's that for gratitude?

Jak 3 faces our pointy-eared hero with his greatest adventure yet. Now banished to the Wasteland—an aptly named place of exile if there ever was one—Jak begins his quest for redemption joined by pals Daxter and Pecker. Their objective: escape from an area five times the size of Haven City.

Needless to say, it won't be easy. A cavernous mine, a vicious volcano, the hostile city of Spargus and other hazardous environments compose the Wasteland, where many inhabitants would sooner eat off Jak's hand than shake it. Luckily, several forms of off-road transportation—from lizardback riding to hovercrafts to decked-out assault vehicles—exist to help speed things along.

And just as Jak fights to return to civilization, he also wages a very personal war—the one within himself. Now possessing Light Eco power in addition to the Dark Eco abilities that led to his banishment, Jak's struggle to balance the two adds further intrigue to the compelling story you'd expect of a Jak title (as seen in more than an hour's worth of cinematic cutscenes).

Jak 3 concludes Naughty Dog's acclaimed Jak trilogy. Loyalties will be tested. A climactic battle will be fought. Shocking secrets will be revealed. And hey...you even get to play as Daxter. This is the one you've been waiting for.



PlayStation 2 NAUGHTY DOG



LIVE IN YOUR WORLD.
PLAY IN OURS.™

Jak 3 is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. Created and developed by Naughty Dog, Inc. © 2004 Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "Live in Your World. Play in Ours." is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc.

www.us.playstation.com

The Morph-Gun returns with 8 new gun mods!

Light Eco does more than just light up a room. Now Jak can fly and self heal.

Board a Hellicat and defend Haven City.

Take the wheel of brand new desert vehicles and explore the vast "Wasteland".

A whole new **game**. A whole new

The world's best fighting game is now the first ever online 3D fi

Challenge to kick your friends' ass from 4000 miles away™ Anime Insurrection™

DEAD OR ALIVE ULTIMATE



www.doultimate.com



world.
fighting game.

ALIVE A T E

... Team Ninja stand ready to take the fighting game franchise into uncharted waters yet again." **IGN**

"Both Hardcore and DOA2 are coming from the ground up to make your Xbox pulse with power." **Official Xbox Magazine**

"most exciting fighting game of the year." **IGN**



Heaven on earth is here with the first 3D online fighting game to date, Dead or Alive Ultimate. Experience the first "Virtual Arcade" with a double disk pack featuring the original DOA and a totally redesigned DOA2, creating a whole new world in online fighting games. DOA2, built from the ground up on a brand new engine, features new interactive worlds, never-before seen costumes, mind-blowing graphics, earth-shattering new moves, and exclusive new cut scenes that reveal secrets from the past. Plus, special bonus content contains a behind the scenes peek at the making of DOAU and the developers behind the series, the DOA3 Booster Disc, collectable trading cards and more!

DEAD OR ALIVE
ULTIMATE



Bungie is keeping things on the up and up by placing strict limits on ranked matches. You can advance only by playing with gamers of equal skill—no more rising to the top by squashing frightened novices. Ranked battles will be restricted to players of similar status and comparable connection speeds.

Additionally, the maps for ladder matches will be randomized. Bungie hopes this will prevent people from overspecializing in a single arena and dominating the competition there. The only way to reach the heights of fame will be to develop extensive tactics and knowledge.

Of course, Bungie isn't out to suck the fun from the multiplayer experience—these restrictions will only apply to official matches. Nonranked games are wide open. So if you're a bottom-rung scrub dying to be fragged by an expert, well, more power to you.

4. MORE THAN THIS

By all accounts, Bungie intends to pack as many combat arenas into the game as possible. Only a few of these have been seen to date, but that limited selection has demonstrated an impressive degree of variety.

The Waterworks level, located in an

underground complex and packed with vehicles of every kind, is ideal for 16-person battles. The desert-themed Bunsit Mound map contains numerous gun turrets, perfect for capture-the-flag battles. At the other end of the spectrum, the claustrophobic Lockdown stage, which features tight corridors and very little space overall, is designed for smaller matches. And Zanzibar, the asymmetrical battlefield first seen ages ago, is crafted for some of the game's more complex multiplayer modes.

Interestingly, those who have played these early maps claim they work remarkably well even when they're not used for their intended purposes. The vast open areas of Waterworks become cautious cat-and-mouse zones for a small group, and Lockdown's cramped spaces turn full-particle-bomb matches into fast-paced, twitchy combat baths.

5. WOO-ING GAMERS

Lara Croft can do it. Max Payne can do it. And Master Chief's time at the target range has paid off, because now he can do it, too.

"It," of course, means taking on the bad guys John Woo-style, with a weapon in each fist. Those who prefer the classic gun-and-grenade approach will have

THE PLAYERS



MASTER CHIEF: The hero of our story, Master Chief is a man of few words. [He lets his gun do the talking.] The product of an advanced supersoldier program, his formidable combat skills and Mjolnir-armored-suit make him worth dozens of ordinary grunts. Though certainly no idiot—he was, after all, the only one to leave the Halo alive—he's perhaps a little too used to taking orders, which almost led him to wipe out most of the life in the galaxy. Fortunately, he has a little angel on his shoulder (more accurately, an A.I. in his helmet) to keep him out of trouble.



THE COVENANT: They're mean, they're green (and purple and blue), and they're from outer space. The Covenant is an alliance of aliens united in a common religious belief that apparently has something to do with destroying all humans. Or, as they like to call us, "the heretics." Their hatred for humanity is rivaled only by their fixation on the Forerunners—and not the SUV kind. While the Covenant races aren't so good at coming up with their own inventions, they're frightfully deadly when adapting other people's technology. A skill they're perfectly happy to bring to bear on the human race.



THE FLOOD: Imagine if Alien had a torrid affair with Resident Evil and the fruit of their union was a homicidal mushroom. That's the Flood: a space fungus with an antisocial streak and a fondness for turning victims of all races into violent zombies. Master Chief's armor protects him from infection, but even he's not entirely safe. After all, Flood warriors have the ability to retain their hosts' intelligence—and even a mushroom is dangerous when it's holding a shotgun.



CORTANA: Beautiful, sarcastic, and portable. What more could you ask for from a hyperintelligent artificial intelligence? Cortana was the guiding mind behind *Pillar of Autumn*, but when the ship was taken by the Covenant, she hitched a ride in Master Chief's skull to prevent vital information from falling into enemy hands. You know, like the location of Earth. She also unraveled the mystery of the Halo and prevented Master Chief from wiping out the Flood, the Covenant, and all of humanity. She supposedly has a limited life span, but we're betting Cortana sticks around for a while.



343 GUILTY SPARK: Apparently intended to serve as Halo's administrative assistant by the race that created it, 343G could best be described as a stir-crazy C-3PO with an amoral killing streak. He was perfectly accommodating while Master Chief was in the process of activating the Halo, but just neglected to mention the fact that doing so would annihilate every living thing for billions of miles in every direction. Details, details. Though his best efforts weren't enough to prevent the Halo from being destroyed, he managed to escape the wreckage and head for parts unknown. Expect to see more of him in the sequel—and, knowing Master Chief's luck, the other 342 before him.



THE HALO: Built by an ancient vanished race for the purpose of defending the universe against the threat of the Flood, the Halo is one of those cures that's a lot worse than the disease. Since Flood spores can infect intelligent life, the Halo is designed to prevent the Flood from spreading by wiping out all intelligent life within a range of tens of thousands of light-years. Master Chief managed to save humanity by blowing the Halo into chunks at the end of the first game, but somewhere along the way, 343 Guilty Spark let slip the fact that, oh yeah, there are a whole lot more there that came from. It seems a cyborg supersoldier's work is never done. ☛

闘
自然



a battle rampage awaits. the super-warriors are ready. KAIJUOO.

水



new cards

08.2004

デュエル・マスターズ
DUEL MASTERS
TRADING CARD GAME
RAMPAGE OF THE SUPER WARRIORS

KAIJUOO.COM

Duel Masters, the Duel Masters logo and characters and their distinctive likenesses are TM & © 2004 Wizards of the Coast. Wizards of the Coast and its logo are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast in the USA and other countries.





*One purpose.
One motive.
One reason for existence.*

Death.

ATARI

FORGOTTEN REALMS
**DEMON
STONE**

FROM THE DEVELOPERS OF THE BESTSELLING GAME,
THE LORD OF THE RINGS™
THE TWO TOWERS™
COMES THE NEXT GREAT SAGA
OF GOOD AND EVIL



Blood
Violence



PlayStation.2







the freedom to fall back on old familiar tactics, but players hoping for a little more firepower will appreciate the ability to lock and load two pistols at once. Or two rifles. Or, say, a Needler and a carbine.

Of course, there are limits. It's only common sense that you can't use both a sniper rifle and a rocket launcher at once; the really big guns can only be used one at a time. And don't expect to equip a gun with the powerful energy sword, either.

6. UP YOUR ARSENAL

Energy sword, you say? Yes, the deadly melee weapon is no longer the exclusive provenance of the Elites. It's one of at least half a dozen new weapons in Master Chief's arsenal.

While the sword won't be much good over distances, it's deadly in close quarters. When closing in on a foe, the sword's target indicator will flash red for a split second. Tapping the Attack button in that instant will cause Master Chief to leap forward for a certain kill.

For those who prefer a bit less finesse in their deathmatches, the brute shot (named for the brute, the new enemy to whom it belongs) tosses explosive slugs that should satisfy even the most bloodthirsty of players.

Both the good guys and the bad guys are equipped with new rifles as well—the human battle rifle and the Covenant carbine, respectively. In normal usage, both are reminiscent of the rapid-fire action provided by the original assault rifle, but with an extra bonus: a 2x scope, just like the pistol has.

7. EXPANDED TARGET PRACTICE

The Covenant has beefed up its ranks, too. At least two new races will be making debuts in *Halo 2*. Besides the

forementioned brute, a heavily armored monstrosity that makes the hunter look like a lightweight, expect to see the enigmatic prophets in action as well. Don't expect biblical lotus-eaters, though; prophets are the psychic overlords of the enemy alliance. Old familiar foes will be returning as well, probably with upgrades.

Of course, to a dedicated Halo fan, the presence of additional bad guys simply means more to shoot at in the absence of fellow gamers. Aficionados of violence will be even happier to learn that the game will contain destructible scenery. Though this interaction won't likely be on par with what's offered by *Half-Life 2*'s vaunted Havok engine, crates and objects will react to damage in a realistic fashion, disintegrating and dislocating under fire.

8. GRAND THEFT WARTHOG

Since *Halo*'s release, only one action series has consistently outsold it: *Grand Theft Auto*. So maybe it should be little surprise that Bungie has borrowed a few ideas from Rockstar's book.

Those tired of being just another candy-colored Spartan II soldier can play the side of evil in the inoffensive metal boots of the Covenant Elite. And players will be able to hijack an occupied vehicle. With a little luck, you can pull a driver right out of his seat and claim his ride as your own. That extends to human and alien vehicles alike—Master Chief has his Banshee pilot's license now. And you won't be forced to target the driver's seat only. Play your cards right and you can swipe the gunner's chair without the pilot even realizing it.

And don't forget the new multiplayer mode that could be taken right from the "BomB Da Base" chapter of *GTA2*—

BEE-LIGHTFUL MYSTERY

➔ Who knew that bug bart could be so interesting?

It began a few months ago when a handful of people received an anonymous gift of honey with cutout letters at the bottom of the jars that could be rearranged to spell "I love bees." Then an official *Halo 2* trailer briefly flashed the URL—www.ilovebees.com—and the mystery was in full swing.

Visitors to the site discovered a quaint webpage that appeared to have been hacked in a rather haphazard manner. A countdown ran constantly on the front page, ticking down to 9 a.m. EST, August 24—at which point the site became even more corrupted and dozens of mysterious GPS coordinates appeared on the links page. Within hours, people pinpointed the physical coordinates cited, stalked out the locations, and reported back with charts and maps and other reconnaissance.

Astute visitors also noticed that the site's corrupted image files could be opened in a hex editor to reveal chunks of text: literary passages, cryptic musings, and jumbled stream-of-consciousness rantings. Current theories suggest the site's corruption was caused by a tortured human-made A.I. from which the Covenant was able to extract the all-important coordinates to Earth or that the site is actually being used to relay the Covenant's intents.

All we know for certain is that some people have a whole lot of time on their hands. ♦♦



MESSAGES FROM
THE PAST

A coalition of alien races assaults a vessel from Earth. A lone cyborg soldier and his helpful female A.I. fend them off with pistols, assault rifles, plasma guns, and rocket launchers. A psychotic A.I. with a mysterious agenda complicates things. The mysterious technology of a vanished race is the key to the fate of the universe.

This might seem like the plot of *Halo*, but actually, it's the story of *Marathon*, Bungie's original first-person shooter that debuted 10 years ago on the Macintosh. All but the most stubborn of fanatics has accepted that the *Halo* series isn't a continuation of the older games, but there's no denying they have a lot in common—the new games are almost like remakes, in fact. With that in mind, here are a few interesting factsoids about *Marathon* that may or may not end up being relevant to future *Halo* games.

- The hero, a Mjolnir Mk. IV cyborg, was built using technology acquired from a Forerunner-like lost race called the Jjaro. In the end, it was his alien nature that allowed him to interface with the Jjaro's relics and save the universe.
- In order to protect humanity, the hero of *Marathon* jumped through time and occasionally allied himself with the bad guys. Which meant that sometimes his human allies fought against him.
- The mad computer, Tycho—343 Guilty Spark's spiritual ancestor—joined forces with the alien coalition to bring an end to the hero.
- When defeated, the bad guys had a tendency to speak things for everyone by doing things like causing the sun to go nova.
- Frog blast the vent core! 🐸

a team-based contest in which you try to plant an explosive device in the other side's headquarters before they return the favor.

9. TWEAK, TWEAK, TWEAK

Not everything about *Halo 2* will be new. Some of the best bits may just be old ideas with a fresh coat of paint. Details count, and every indication is that Bungie is spending plenty of time fine-tuning its creation. In particular, the weapons have been upgraded. The Needler is much more useful, while the pistol is not as effective—its zoom function has been weakened to encourage use of the battle rifle.

Vehicles are not only more varied (the Warthog is a machine for all climates now) but also reflect actual damage and eventually even explode. No more indestructible rides—you'll be able to tell just how badly your wheels are faring based on visible damage.

10. PLAY IT AGAIN

And finally, what of the rumors of instant replays? Some highly unauthorized photos of an early *Halo 2* beta hit the Web over the summer and offered a tantalizing hint of precisely that.

It's certainly not impossible. Many shooters offer a similar feature, not least of all *Marathon*, Bungie's *Halo* predecessor. *Marathon* films had a powerful effect on the game's fan community, crack players posted movies of their most impressive feats and constantly sought to one-up their peers with insane accomplishments, like completing the highest difficulty level using nothing but their fists.

Swapping *Halo* films online is already a popular practice, but having the feature built into the game itself would make the biggest online game of 2004 that much more compelling. Bungie, however, isn't talking.

O SOLO ME

Believe it or not, *Halo 2*'s multiplayer isn't the main draw for everyone. Some people think the story-driven solo mode is where the action is. Though they find some appeal in the prospect of blowing their friends into a fine red mist over Xbox Live, what really gets them going are the subtle mysteries of the *Halo* story.

Why does the Covenant hate humanity? What is 343 Guilty Spark up to now that his home is gone? And what does Master Chief look like beneath that helmet, anyway?

Alas, Bungie has always been notoriously evasive about the plot specifics of its upcoming games. *Halo 2* has made the developer so tight-lipped that you'd think it'd been using Botox lip balm.

We know that the solo campaign will take Master Chief to our favorite planet, Earth; the Covenants appear to have pinpointed the location of humanity's home and launched an all-out assault to purge us from the galaxy. But we also hear a second *Halo* comes into play at some point—so we can expect to see a plot wrinkle big enough to draw Earth's greatest hero away from the imminent threat to his home turf.

Unfortunately, that's about all Bungie has let slip about *Halo 2*'s story, at least directly. However, a number of tantalizing hints can be gleaned from the three *Halo* novels. And good old-fashioned observation and guesswork never hurt; the first game left a number of loose ends that will eventually need to be resolved.

Of course, given *Halo 2*'s inevitable success, the plot is likely to generate as many mysteries as its solves. After all, as the saying goes, they've got to leave something for the sequel. 🐸



DID SOMEONE SAY
IT'S TIME TO UPGRADE?



EBGAMES™
electronics boutique®

www.ebgames.com

**UPGRADE YOUR SYSTEM TODAY...
AND SAVE!**



GET A GAME BOY ADVANCE SP FOR JUST...

\$49.99!*

*When you present this coupon and trade-in your working
Game Boy Advance system and 1 Gameboy Advance game.*



EBC3007234

While supplies last. Cannot be combined with any other offer or promotion. Taxes and instructions are required for software. Customer may be responsible for tax on trade-ins. See sales associate for complete details. Offer valid 09/09/04 - 10/31/04. Not valid at ebgames.com

*\$89.99 Canadian

EBGAMES
electronics boutique

FOR A STORE NEAR YOU CALL: 1-800-800-5166 · OR SHOP ONLINE AT EBGAMES.COM

EBGAMES
electronics boutique

We take games seriously™

RED HOT

GMA PUTS CLOVER STUDIO'S ATSUSHI INABA ON THE HOT SEAT TO TALK GAMES

Atsushi Inaba has presided over some of the industry's freshest, most inspired games. Innovative, bold, and gameplay-rich, these awards you could use to describe every one of the games that have fallen under his watchful eye. Games such as *Resident Evil Code: Veronica X*, *Viewtiful Joe*, and the digital epiphany for Xbox owners, *Steel Battalion: Line of Contact*. With work on *Viewtiful Joe 2* and the upcoming *Kamiya* underway, we figured we'd catch the con artist while we can.

GMR: You once worked for Capcom's internal-development studios, but now you've broken off on your own. Can you please explain the genesis of Clover Studio?

ATSUSHI INABA: It wasn't that we wanted to just break off and get away. We did this so that we could make more original games. We wanted the freedom to make the games we wanted to make.

GMR: Is Clover Studio completely independent?

AI: We are in coordination with Capcom. They are our primary publication company.

GMR: How hard was it to move *Viewtiful Joe* from GameCube to PlayStation 2, since the technologies are so different?

AI: It was extremely difficult moving it over from the GC to the PS2. You might not be able to see it when you play the game—we've put a lot of energy and power into this—but it was very difficult to do. Our folks that did the transplant have a lot of ability, and their skill level is very high. The fella that worked on this used to work with the Dreamcast hardware on *Resident Evil Code: Veronica*. So he's used to dealing with these small coding issues, and that's really why [we] put him on this project, because he's really good at doing that kind of stuff.

GMR: It's been said that GameCube and Xbox are similar to develop for. Was there any thought given to putting *Viewtiful Joe* on Xbox?

AI: Yeah, we've thought about putting it out on Xbox before—that's something that we've considered. But right now, we have a lot on our hands and we really don't have the time, though it's definitely something we've considered.

GMR: How much effort was put into making Dante a playable character in the PS2 version of *Viewtiful Joe*?

AI: Implementing Dante took us about a month or so. We got all of the staff into it. When they heard we were going to use Dante, everyone was excited and said, "Use me! Use me!"

GMR: In other games, something like this may have seemed like an easy palette swap. But in this instance, everything is so customized to Dante's character. His moves and everything have been redesigned specifically for Dante. It's like playing a whole new game. How much does this have to do with director Kamiya [who also worked on *Devil May Cry*]?

AI: Yes, of course we worked with Kamiya on this. But as far as Dante is concerned, it would have been boring to just stick a character in there and have all the same moves as everybody else. We wanted to make it more interesting. When we decided to use Dante, everybody was like, "Let's use this! Let's use this!" So [we] really tried to do the best we could with it.

GMR: What are Kamiya's strengths as a designer?

AI: What makes him so unique is his sense of what's cool—making the look and feel of things very cool. That's probably one of his greatest strengths. Another thing he's very good at is incorporating that into the scenarios and making all that come out in the scenarios in the game and story.

GMR: *VJ* was very new and fresh because it's both a throwback and a new take on a two-dimensional brawling game. How will *VJ2* maintain the first *VJ*'s momentum?

AI: *VJ2* isn't a radical change from the

first. *VJ*. We're not going in a totally new direction here. What we're doing is bringing it a step up. People that liked *VJ* are really going in the *VJ2*. Everything they saw in *VJ* that was good, they are going to love more in *VJ2*. Kind of the same thing, but bumped up a notch.

GMR: Increasing feedback you got about *VJ* that you'd implement in *VJ2*.

AI: We weren't too conscious about feedback that we got because, for the most part, it was very positive. So we weren't very influenced by that in the sequel. What we've mostly focused on is that in Japan, people said *VJ* was too hard, but in the U.S. they said it was perfect. So that was what we were worried about, getting that aspect 50/50 right. As for as other stuff in the game that people may have been disappointed with, we weren't looking at that.

GMR: Is that why Capcom re-released the original *VJ* in Japan on GameCube with the kids' mode?

AI: That's right.

GMR: What is it as a fan of these games? Why don't you play these as challenging games?

AI: I don't know if that's really the case. Isn't it more that American people are so good at playing games? American people are probably really good at action games. That's probably what it is.

GMR: Is there anything included in *VJ2* that wasn't done or couldn't be done in the first *VJ*?

AI: We never had the problem in *VJ* where we wanted to put something in and couldn't because of time or space or whatever. We were able to get everything we wanted in that game. So this time around with *VJ2*, we're

putting in a brand-new feeling—a brand-new sense of play. It's a new chapter to the story, basically.

GMR: What is the big shift for *VJ2*?

AI: There are two things that are new about this game. No. 1 is the VFX power. There is the VFX Replay power. You mix it in with all of the other powers that you have. And there are combinations you can do that keeps it fun and interesting. Other things are the puzzles and riddles, and depending on how you figure these puzzles out, the deeper you can go into the game. With the addition of Silvia as another character, we're looking to provide a new kind of play through her. She's the kind of character that uses a gun. And the other thing is cooperative play.

GMR: How does cooperative play work? Using the Boosted VFX Powers with two people in co-op seems like a nightmare.

AI: We found an awesome way to do that, but I can't reveal that yet.

GMR: So what's the story behind *VJ2*?

AI: In the previous installment, Joe the hero, this time *VJ2*'s about Joe and his father—a fella by the name of Kurt. So that's a new element that comes into the story.

GMR: Before Joe was called *Viewtiful Joe*, he was originally called *Red Hot Man*. But Takemura tried to change his name for legal reasons. Were the names of his moves called *Red Hot* moves, so were they still called *Viewtiful* at the time? Where'd *Viewtiful Joe* come from?

AI: You know your information well! We did change his name for legal reasons. A lot of the moves still had the same, so it was just a name change. As far as the name *Viewtiful Joe* is concerned, it was



GMR: What have you guys learned from taking the series online?

AI: It was my first time putting together an online game. There was a lot of uncharted territory there for us. We did learn a lot. But as far as problems and all of that are concerned, I'd like to think of it as online gaming, as a new and interesting media that I'd like to pursue, challenge, and explore even further. Putting *Line of Contact* on Xbox Live was very difficult. It's a decent game, but next time I want to do it differently.

GMR: Do you mean in a *Steel Battalion* sequel or a totally different kind of online game?

AI: Something I would be interested in doing is a kind of online RPG kind of thing. That might be fun.

GMR: Is it true that *Resident Evil* director Shinji Mikami has joined Clover Studio?

AI: That's right.

GMR: He broke out on his own for a while, correct? Acting as a consultant for Capcom, to get away from the internal politics and focus on his passion of designing games. Why did he join Clover Studio?

AI: Clover Studio is something that Mikami and I thought of a long time ago, and now we're finally doing it. Mikami worked as a director and designer on lots of games, and that's what he was really into doing. The higher up you get in the organization, the more you have to deal with. The further you actually get away from game design and directing, you have to deal with all this stuff. When he and I were talking about this, he said, "Let's switch places. Let's do what we want to do. You want to design and make games—do it. I'm a producer. I'll be the producer." It kind of evolved naturally that we should do this. He's a Clover Studio man.

GMR: Does this mean that once he's done with *Resident Evil 4*, he will work exclusively on Clover Studio titles? Or is *Resident Evil* something that will fall under the Clover Studio umbrella?

AI: He will be in Clover Studio when that's done. This is something we put together in the middle of *RE4*, and we've had some people from our side participating in that. It's very much a cooperative/fluid relationship that we have. So yes, he will be a part of Clover Studio, then. And to answer your second question, *Resident Evil* is still Capcom's internal title. **◆◆**

really Kamiya's vision of making a really cool and beautiful game. Something with style, something that looked good. And then mixing that in with his VFX power where you actually see stuff—you could view beautiful moves. So that was the rationale behind that name. At first the reaction was really bad, both in Japan and the U.S. In Japan, they were like, "What the hell is that?" And in the U.S., they were like, "Hey, you spelled it wrong!" We wanted to do *Red Hot Man*, but there was a band called the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

GMR: You had to change the name because of the Red Hot Chili Peppers? Guess you won't be buying any copies of "Under the Bridge."

AI: Hahahaha!

GMR: Can you elaborate on the new Super 6 machine [Joe's side-scrolling jet fighter]?

AI: We initially planned to have seven different forms. The more we get into this game, the more forms we add in. There are a lot of different forms you can play as. I would like people to think of these sections as a change of pace. Not a major part of the game—just something to change your feeling while you're playing.

GMR: How is the *Steel Battalion: Line of Contact* community doing at the moment?

AI: There are still some people out there playing, though probably not as many as were playing in the very beginning.

GMR: Are there any downloads you guys have planned via Xbox Live to revive the community, or have you guys moved on?

AI: That's not something we're really thinking about right now. What we would like for people to do is play the world that we've given them in *Line of Contact*.

NOW

Another month of reviews...another month without *Half-Life 2*. We'd say "soon, hopefully!" but at this point, it'll get here when it gets here. Other notes of interest: We had reviews written for *Juiced* and *The Red Star*, but in the wake of Acclaim's Chapter 7 bankruptcy, both games are now awaiting new publishers. Until then, we'll hold the reviews.



HOW WE RATE

1 AWFULNESS 2 DISASTROUS 3 PITIFUL 4 DIPS 5 HURDLE 6 GOOD STUFF 7 RECOMMENDED 8 EXCELLENT 9 TOTALLY SICK 10 TIMELESS CLASSIC

YOUR GUIDE TO THE GMR SCORING SYSTEM

UPFRONTS WHERE MULTIPLE VERSIONS OF A GAME ARE REVIEWED, GMR WILL INDICATE DIFFERENCES ONLY IF THEY SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT THE GAMEPLAY.

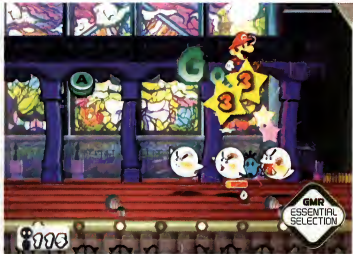
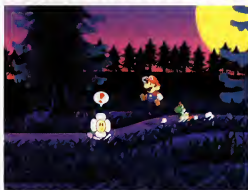
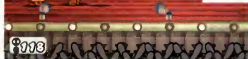
REVIEWED THIS ISSUE:

ADVANCE GUARDIAN HEROES	GBA	134
ARMORED CORE: NEXUS	PS2	112
CHOROQ	PS2	136
CONFLICT: VIETNAM	PS2/KB	121
DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION EXTREME	PS2	118
DEF JAM FIGHT FOR NY	GC/PS2/KB	122
DONKEY KONGA	GC	130
EVIL GENIUS	PC	140
GUILTY GEAR ISUKA	PS2	132
GUNGRAVE OVERDOSE	PS2	116
HEADHUNTER: REDEMPTION	PS2/KB	124
KATAMARI DAMACY	PS2	110
KIRBY AND THE AMAZING MIRROR	GBA	101
MARIO PINBALL LAND	GBA	139
MEGA MAN X COMMAND MISSION	GC/PS2	127
MEGA MAN ZERO 3	GBA	127
MONSTER HUNTER	PS2	138
OTDI E	KB	125
PAPER MARIO: THE THOUSAND-YEAR DOOR	GC	105
POKEMON FIRERED/AEAFORGEN	GBA	134
ROBOTECH: INVASION	PS2/KB	112
SECOND SIGHT	GC/PS2/KB	136
SHADOW HEARTS: COVENANT	PS2	128
SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI: NOCTURNE	PS2	114
SLV 2: BAND OF THIEVES	PS2	128
SOUND/ADVICE	AUDIO	143
STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT	PS2/KB	120
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 2	GC/PS2/KB	121
TERMINATOR 3: THE REDEMPTION	PS2/KB	114
TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005	GC/PS2/KB	101
TIME CRISIS: CRISIS ZONE	PS2	115
UNDER THE SKIN	PS2	108





→ At the conclusion of each chapter, there are two extra sequences. In the first, you play as the kidnapped Princess Peach (just like in the original), and then there are side-scrolling sequences starring Bowser in "traditional" Mario levels with a King Koopa twin.



PAPER MARIO: THE THOUSAND-YEAR DOOR

ON PAPER, IT WORKS

EVERYONE | GC

PUBLISHER NINTENDO
DEVELOPER INTELLEGEN SYSTEMS
PRICE \$49.99
RELEASE DATE MARCH 2004
PLATFORMS GC
REGION JAPAN

➔ In the year 2000, the videogame world was eagerly awaiting the arrival of the PlayStation 2. All anyone could talk about was *Tekken Tag Tournament*, *Gran Turismo 3*, and how rogue nations wanted to import the consoles so they could be used to control advanced weapon systems (mutually assured destruction at the low cost of \$299.99!). Lost in the hysteria was *Paper Mario*, the charming follow-up to the SNES's *Super Mario RPG*. A late arrival on the then-comatose N64, *Paper Mario* put a new spin on most of the traditional RPG conventions but was sadly overlooked by too many people.

For the most part, *The Thousand-*

Year Door doesn't deviate from the design of its predecessor. Combat is primarily timing based: Mario and his active partner attack and defend, and the amount of damage they inflict and reflect depends on when buttons are pressed or analog sticks are rotated. This always keeps the battles active, interesting, strategic, and fun. Fans of 2003's similar and superb *Mario & Luigi* will feel right at home, despite the playable absence of Mr. Green Jeans. Mario and his partners never team up for attacks, but they can use their abilities (granted to them by equipment upgrades and badges) to enhance one another's offense and defense. The types and number of enemies you fight

also plays into the strategy: aerial buddies, like paragoombas and Lakitus (lakotae?), are, of course, not affected by hammers or ground attacks, spiny enemies cannot be jumped on, and some enemies combine these defensive traits (the spiny parabeetle, impervious to jumps, hammers, ground attacks, fire, and explosions, is a particular challenge). Badges can be activated to grant new abilities and adjust stats, and each partner can be upgraded twice. It all adds up to a combat system that's incredibly balanced and always fresh.

The story is typical lighthearted Nintendo fare and very similar in structure to the first *Paper Mario*, a fact



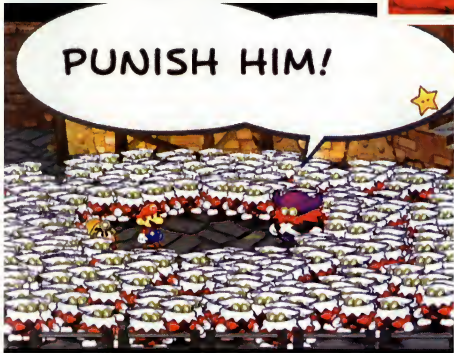
[GAME OVER?]

THE PIT OF 100 TRIALS

➔ Upon finishing the game, you might be tempted to turn off the GameCube and move on. But loading up your completed save file gives Mario a return ticket to Rogueport, where he can do the extra fun stuff that had to be passed up [saving the world is important, after all]. Be sure to check out The Pit of 100 Trials beneath Rogueport, where you'll find not only the large sack, but also the hardest boss in the game. **1E**



PUNISH HIM!



➔ Paper Mario likes to throw lots of characters at you. In fact, Shigeru Miyamoto initially balked at the idea of a Paper Mario sequel until the designers showed him the plan for hundreds of characters on screen at once. Read the interview, plus a lot more about Paper Mario, at gmr.1UP.com.



that's not only recognized by Intelligent Systems, but actually mocked (in a self-deprecating manner, of course) by the means of Luigi telling Mario the story of his parallel adventure...which also happens to involve collecting the seven fragments of an ancient treasure so that he can save a princess from a neighboring kingdom. The message: If it ain't broke, no need to fix it, just have fun with it. And NOA's excellent localization is all about fun: Just like in *Mario & Luigi*, there's a bit of a wacky, subversive, and overall self-referential vibe that's not overly sweet. Paper Mario might look like it's intended exclusively for the younger set, but all ages should get a kick out of it.

If the game could be faulted for anything, it would be its overreliance on backtracking: The levels and areas Mario and his party travel through are usually not very large. So in what seems like an effort to extend the playtime, situations arise in the game that force the party to travel back and forth through the same areas multiple times. There's even one of those bothersome fetch quests that seem to be popping up in Nintendo's major games this generation, though thankfully, it doesn't play a major role.

But it's hard to complain about playing in a world as colorful and imaginative as Paper Mario. The mix of 2D characters on a 3D plane not only

looks appealing, the gameplay that's designed around the concept (Mario's transformation skills in particular) is a creative fusion of art and design. For a franchise that's been around for so long, fiddling with the formula is sometimes necessary. In the case of *The Thousand-Year Door*, it's very much appreciated. **1E**

—Andrew Pfister

GMR ABOVE THE FELD **9¹⁰**

BETTER THAN RANDOM BATTLES
ON PAR WITH MARIO & LUIGI: SUPERSTAR SAGA
GO FID: PAPER MARIO 15A4

2ND OPINION

This is the best Mario game in years. Yes, better than Mario. Sometime there, I said it, but c'mon, the fresh art style, easy controls, a fun combat system, and layers of depth and humor make this Paper Mario a GOTV contender. Note to Nintendo: Make a DS version! **1E**

—Tom Byron

LEGENDS HAVE NEVER BEEN PLAYABLE...
UNTIL NOW.



KING ARTHUR



WIELD EXCALIBUR

PLAY AS ONE OF 5 KNIGHTS, INCLUDING
ARTHUR, LANCELOT AND GUINEVERE.

BATTLE ON HORSEBACK

GET A LEG UP ON THE ENEMY
WITH POWERFUL HORSE ATTACKS.

ARCHERY ATTACKS

RANGED COMBAT GIVES YOU
DLAD AIM AND EXPLOSIVE RESULTS.



Violence



PlayStation 2

KONAMI

www.konami.com/ps2

UNDER THE SKIN

LESS THAN MEETS THE EYE

TEEN | PS2

➔ Aliens are invading, but don't worry, they don't want to overthrow us. According to Capcom's *Under the Skin*, they'd settle for being really annoying, and they are...a little too annoying.

The goal of *Under the Skin* is to prove young Cosmi's worth by playing constant pranks on Earthlings going about their everyday business. The graphical style is a great fit for the game: The colorful, over-the-top cel-shaded characters emphasize the prankish spirit at work, and the Earthlings all react wonderfully to being punched with a boxing glove or shocked with an electro-bomb.

It would be preferable, though, if they reacted a little bit better in gameplay terms. See, Earthlings cough up coins when successfully smacked around, and Cosmi's goal always has to do with collecting a certain number of them before time is up. But since the coins you lose for being hit are wildly out of proportion to those you

get by hitting others, what should be a frenzied game of give-and-take is mostly a frustrating game of give-and-give. If you lose coins after the timer's reached about the halfway point, you might as well just restart.

Things feel a little bit more fair in the two-player game, but there are plenty of other titles out there with more robust multiplayer action, if that's what you're looking for. *Under the Skin* is a good concept with fun trappings, but it doesn't quite have enough going on under the surface. **D+**

—Nich Maragos

PS2	CAPCOM	2005	\$29.99
PS2	CAPCOM	PLAYERS 1-2	
ESR	SEPTEMBER	GRADES	JAHN

GMR 5/10

BETTER THAN: STUDIO INADVERTS
WAIT FOR IT: DESTROY ALL HUMANS!
OR PERHAPS: ALIEN HOMOING



0 1 2 3 0 6 0

MACHINE GUN

40 / 40

50:00

PS2	NAMCO	2005	\$29.99
PS2	NAMCO	PLAYERS 1	
ESR	SEPTEMBER	GRADES	JAHN

GMR 7/10

BETTER THAN: IN HOUSE OF THE DEAD 3
NOT AS GOOD AS: TIME CRISIS 3
WAIT FOR IT: RESIDENT EVIL: CODE: VERMILION 2

36:48

TIME CRISIS: CRISIS ZONE

JUST HOLD DOWN THE TRIGGER

TEEN | PS2

➔ If things like story and depth are important to you, it might be best to stop reading this review right now. *Time Crisis: Crisis Zone* isn't for you. There are some big RPG reviews a few pages down, you might want to try them. But if you're the type who gets hot and bothered over bare-bones, balls-to-the-wall light-gun shooters, read on.

Light on story and heavy on gunfire, *Crisis Zone* is a shooter on rails that casts players as a SWAT-style operative who has to mow down an army of terrorists while ducking for cover behind his impenetrable riot shield. And that's all there is to it, really. *Crisis Zone* doesn't even have genre staples such as hostages and upgradeable weapons. Players simply get a machine gun (or two, if you've got an extra *Guncon 2*) and go to town on endless waves of pop-up goons

while trashing as much of the lavish scenery as possible.

But simple or not, *Crisis Zone* still dishes out the visceral thrills. It starts out easy—shots that will actually hit you are telegraphed by blinking red rings—but quickly turns into a grueling test of timing and skill as your enemies get faster and start popping up out of nowhere.

It's not all just arcade brutality, though. Adding replayability to the home version are a second original story mode and crisis mission, a series of insanely difficult skill challenges that let players unlock new weapons.

Crisis Zone is short, linear, and, in its best moments, incredibly difficult. But for those who long to feel their hands cramp up around the cold, hard plastic, that might be enough. **D+**

—Mikel Reparaz

The road to salvation and the path to hell are both paved in blood.
WHICH WILL YOU WALK?



Over 50 hours of gameplay with alternate endings!



Customize your character with Magatama, living parasites that grant the host demonic powers!



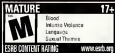
Persuade over 100 different demons to join your party. Evolve or fuse them to form even more powerful ones.

"Call it the RPG for the GTA generation. No console RPG to date offers this many choices, this much customization, or so much dark and gritty style. And if anyone pays attention to its content, it might create a little controversy, as well."

— G4TechTV

"A deep and twisted post-apocalyptic RPG with stunning visuals and a mature story -- something quite unlike what we've seen before." — GameSpy

"...one of the more surprising overall games of 2004." — IGN.com



PlayStation 2



Featuring Dante from
Capcom's
Devil May Cry 2™

ATLUS
WWW.ATLUS.COM



→ Katamari starts small as you roll around picking up paper clips, pushpins, erasers, and other bits and pieces. As your ball gets bigger, its gravitational pull starts sucking up larger debris, like cars and buildings. It won't roll like a round ball, either: The junk changes the ball's trajectory.

KATAMARI DAMACY

JUST CALL IT KD

EVERYONE | PS2

➔ You have killed enough Nazis this year. You've also slain more than enough demons. In fact, as a videogamer, you've put to rest rather more than your fair share of foes. It's time to create instead of destroy. Fortunately, with *Katamari Damacy*, Namco invites you to do just that—and it's just as much fun as slicing through ranks of the undead with an oversized sword. Maybe more so.

As the diminutive Prince of the Cosmos, it's your job to roll a huge ball around and gather objects—from pushpins all the way up to entire skyscrapers—to create new stars to replace those destroyed by your drunken father.

Rolling a ball around is fun—it's a simple truth. *Marble Madness* ruled, *Super Monkey Ball* soared, and even the ball-based bits of the last *Crash Bandicoot* saved the game from complete ignominy. *Katamari Damacy* is no exception. But obviously, there's more to it than that: The game has an amazing energy and great joy. Its unfettered creativity is astounding, and this is where *Katamari* truly excels.

Hundreds of different objects litter the world, and collecting them all adds a layer of amusement on top of the sheer pleasure of the core gameplay. Doing it all while listening to one of the absolute best original game soundtracks yet assembled is icing on

a cake that's almost too sweet already.

If *Katamari Damacy* stumbles anywhere, it's in its length. You're going to want to go back and gather more stuff, but it's a brief if ecstatic ride. The multiplayer is basic, too, which hampers an experience that begs to be shared. Still, for a mere \$20, you get one of the most appealing games of the PS2 generation. Lovely. **B+**
—Christian Nutt

2ND OPINION

As the statement of risk, especially the question to it, continues to influence the game industry, it's encouraging to see Namco not only bring *Katamari* over from Japan, but to keep its name, soundtrack, and even packaging completely intact. We're not sure who made this decision, but we're glad that they did. **B+**
—Andrew Pittler

GMR TRUCK **8/10**

BETTER THAN ACTUALLY COLLECTING GARBAGE. WE'RE THANKFUL FOR THE U.S. RELEASE. WAIT FOR IT! SUPER MONKEY BALL, PS2.

PUBLISHER NAMCO
DEVELOPER NAMCO
PRICE \$19.99
RELEASE DATE SEPTEMBER
PLAYERS 1-2
GENRE ACTION



SUCKS

SUCKS ON FIRE!

TIME FOR A
LITTLE BAD COP,
BAD COP



weeknights on



G4TECHTV

g4techtv.com

All games are not created equal. Join Adan Sessler and Morgan Webb for the most brutally honest game reviews on television. Every weeknight 11 ET/PT, only on G4TechTV.

If you don't get G4TechTV call your cable operator and demand it or go to g4techtv.com for more tips and tricks.

ARMORED CORE: NEXUS

GIANT ROBOTS!

TEEN | PS2

➔ Despite the seemingly endless *Armored Core* games, expansions, sequels, and semisequels that have emerged since the series' inception on PS2, it has always lacked the right controls at the right time. It took years for From Software to merely add analog controls (*Armored Core 2: Another Age*), and only now has the slow-moving developer implemented exactly what the series has needed all along: first-person shooter controls.

The staples that have earned *Armored Core* its deserved following remain intact. The hundreds of parts, millions of combinations, and almost insane attention to detail are all here. Recent improvements such as the A.I. helpers that assist you during missions (originally cribbed from From's own import-only Dreamcast game *Frame Grindel*) and first-person view are back as well. But the addition of first-person-shooter-style controls is what takes *Nexus* to the next step. The series instantly goes from being niche to nice, now that turning your *Core* is simpler for the uninitiated. The old-school controls are still available for

you fuddies out there, but taking full advantage of the twin analog configuration makes a world of difference. It's not exactly Halo, but it's that good.

Beyond simply adding new controls *Nexus* includes a second "Revolution" disc that allows players to compete with each other via an iLink hookup and offers a "greatest hits" collection of classic *Armored Core* episodes from previous games, reenvisioned using the current graphics engine. This disc is filled with tons of extras, such as CG galleries, movies, and other things fans will go crazy for. A nice touch.

Where *Nexus* falls short is in the presentation department. Sure, the game's interface is as slick as it's ever been, but *Armored Core* still has to make the leap into full-on storytelling. Would it be too much to inject the game with some characters or cut-scenes à la *Front Mission 4*? *Nexus*' protagonists still lurk behind anonymous text boxes and mission descriptions. But if you can get past this minor malfeasance, you'll find a series that gets better with age. **A-**
—James Mielke



FOR ARCADE	PRICE \$29.99
BY FROM SOFTWARE	PLAYERS 1-2
AVAILABLE NOW	DEVELOPER JAPAN

GMR 8 WIFE REAL ACTUALITY

MORE AFFORDABLE THAN STEEL BATERLION STILL NOT AS GOOD AS IT COULD BE WAIT FOR IT PHANTOM CRASH 2



ROBOTECH: INVASION

EVEN MORE GIANT ROBOTS!

TEEN | XB (REVIEWED) | PS2

➔ With its sniperscope, thermal vision, and gun-butt melee attack firmly in hand, *Robotech: Invasion* is as by the book as first-person shooter comes. The controls are just dandy, and there's plenty of shooting to be done, but no single aspect of this *Invasion* makes the game particularly notable—it looks plain, sounds plain, and pretty much plays plain, too.

Set after the events of the Next Generation leg of the Next Generation Robotech timeline, *Invasion* finds the remnants of an expeditionary force fighting the good fight against an alien, uh, invasion. The game's signature gimmick, of course, is the Cyclone—a transformable motorcycle that can be folded up into a suit of armor on the fly. The potential for too-cool onscreen action is obvious; had its implementation been more finely tuned, this could have made for some truly compelling gameplay. But as it stands, the breakdown is far too simplistic: strafe and shoot stuff while on foot and use the motorcycle mode (armed with mostly useless missiles) to traverse longer distances.

The game is further hindered by a severe lack of variety: Only a handful of weapons are available, and they're by and large interchangeable. Considerable care has been lavished on rendering various iterations of the Invd invader, but—due perhaps to an unwillingness to tamper with such a cherished license—there's an appalling shortage of different kinds of enemy to engage. Mission types suffer

similarly, although a series of "covering" fire missions later in the game slows down the action and ups the frustration accordingly.

On the positive, there's a lot of game here to play—levels are lengthy affairs, generously doused with checkpoints—and Xbox Live play provides even more bang for the buck. But when there are so many more compelling options available in the genre, that's a bit moot, the appeal here lies in the game's anime roots. But without the cel-shaded aesthetic to bolster what's an otherwise mediocre shooter, even those seeking simply to relive their glory days of after-school anime and protocoulture will find this sorely disappointing. **B-**
—David Chen



FOR SHOOTING	PRICE \$29.99
BY DEVIANT DOLL	PLAYERS 1
AVAILABLE NOW	DEVELOPER JAPAN

GMR 5 WIFE REAL ACTUALITY

BETTER THAN THE SOUTHERN CROSS (P) NOT AS GOOD AS ROBOTECH: BATTLECRY WAIT FOR IT SIGA'S ROBOTREN GAME

Out off behind enemy lines with no way to contact help, four young, barely trained soldiers realize their only hope for survival is to head into the heart of darkness. With few rations and dwindling ammunition, the only thing separating them from freedom is 100 miles of ruthless terrain, crawling with unseen enemies and filled with hidden booby traps. Welcome to Vietnam.



CONFLICT VIETNAM



Get behind the wheel of Jeeps, tanks, helicopters, and river boats.



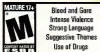
14 enormous missions in jungles, villages, temples, and underground tunnels.



Paranoia inducing enemy AI pits you against foes in the environments they are the masters of.



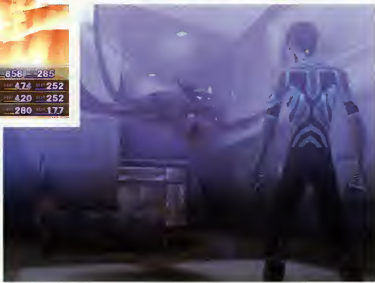
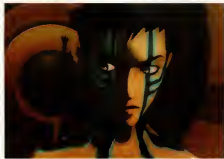
PlayStation 2



Trademark and © 2004 SCI Games Limited, published by Take-Two Interactive Software and its subsidiaries Global Star Software, the Global Star Software logo, Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. and the Take-Two Company logo are trademarks of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Global Star Software, Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of Take-Two Interactive Software, Inc. Pivotal Games and the Pivotal Games logo are trademarks of Pivotal Games Limited. "PlayStation" and the "PS2" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Microsoft, Xbox, and the Xbox logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or other countries and are used under license from Microsoft. The ratings icon is a trademark of the Interactive Digital Software Association. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. All rights reserved.



→ Trust us when we say you've never seen a game that looks quite like *Nocturne*. Its visuals are so incredibly stylish, the rest of your game collection will get embarrassed.



SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI: NOCTURNE

HELL ON EARTH

MATURE | PS2

PUBLISHER: KLEI
DEVELOPER: KLEI
PRICE: \$69.99
ESRB: MATURE
PLAYERS: 1
OS: XBOX

➔ While much has rightfully been made of the ethical choices in recent RPGs like *Fable*, *Shin Megami Tensei* got there first—in the early '90s with a string of Japan-only SNES titles. *Nocturne* instead gives you a fascinating choice between three philosophies bent on reshaping a postapocalyptic world into an entirely new reality.

As a demon-infused human traveler, you'll comb through the ruins of Tokyo, gathering allies from the ranks of mythological creatures that have taken over. This warped and crumbling metropolis is the home to many factions of demons and gods.

The core gameplay, however, is

more grounded in tradition than the story. *Nocturne* is long and tough as nails. Things are made harsher by the game's deceptively simple battle system. Strategy is derived from the weaknesses and strengths of the combatants. Taking advantage of your foe gains extra turns. Enemies can do this as well, resulting in a tug-of-war.

Since you can completely customize your party of monsters and your character's skills, you have a lot of freedom. Unfortunately, this results in more trial and error than is necessary, because picking the wrong powers can spell your doom. It's incredibly tough but, when it comes off, very satisfying. Plus, experimenting with creating the

beasts is addictive.

Visually, the game stands with the strongest visions of this generation—games such as *ICO*, *Rez*, and *Zelda: The Wind Waker*. The design is impeccable and completely distinctive. Though the gameplay can be conventional, there's no chance you've ever played a game quite like *Nocturne*. You should. It's a stunning, mature fantasy. **A-**

—Christian Nutt

GMR 8/10

BETTER THAN EXPERIENCING THE APOCALYPSE
SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST
WAIT FOR IT: DIGITAL DEVIL SAGA AVATAR TUNER

2ND OPINION

Just as the title can be described as a hodgepodge of laws, songs, and folk tales that fuse into an amazing whole, *SMT* is a fusion of *Shin*, *Paradise Lost*, *Final Fantasy*, *Aokimon*, and *Theology 101*. The result is a deep and truly mature game marred only by brutal difficulty and lengthy dungeons. **A-**

—Therapy, Roughen
previous editor
OAT

Cut the cable...
Go WIRELESS!



Wireless Arcade Sticks



Wireless Dance Mats



Wireless Mini Controllers



Wireless Controllers



Wireless Racing Wheels

- Play up to 30ft. away!
- Supports up to 16 Players!

- Powerful 2.4 Ghz!
- Auto shut-off saves battery life!



Maximum Gaming
for

Xbox™

PlayStation 2

GameCube

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2005

GET IN THE HOLE!

TEEN | PS2 (REVIEWED) | OCT 1 '04

EA's golf franchise blew up like a roll of tinfoil in the microwave last year, and many heralded Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2004 as the best golf game yet. It's time to take that title over to a new installment, however, because 2005 improves upon near perfection with some fresh tricks and even more depth.

The game's control, with the amazing analog swing, is essentially untouched, featuring the same power boosts, spins, and shot types. It does get a tweak in the form of TigerVision—a power-up that shows you the precise spot to aim your putt from anywhere on the green. You'll be hitting 90-footers without batting an eyelash. Smartly, you have very limited use of TigerVision, similar to NBA Street's gambreakers, making you pick your spots.

TigerVision may make things easier, but Tour Mode difficulty does the opposite. For those gamers who nail more birds than KFC, this setting gets rid of aspects we take for granted, such as caddy tips or using spin from the rough. You'll really need to be on the top of your game to eke out a respectable showing using this difficulty.

Shower-proofing is this series' answer to Madden's owner mode. Instead of tweaking ticket prices

and team locations like in Madden, you're choosing fairway width and lawn-mowing patterns. You can even color the greens pink or put your own logo on the tees. Think of it as something else fun to do if you get bored with the actual game of golf—presuming that happens.

The addition of legendary club swingers such as Jack Nicklaus and Arnold Palmer to the roster adds credibility to balance out the fantasy golfers. It's also refreshing to see so many new courses, though the total number has gone down slightly. More Game Face options, trophy balls, and online options round out a truly robust package. Only the confusing chipping and overabundance of save screens keep this from being under par in every aspect. Once again, PGA Tour is the must-have golf game. The grass is still greener on Tiger's side of the fence. **B+**
—Justin Leeper

PGI SA SAVES	PRICE: \$49.99
ON EA GOLFBOX ONLINE	PLAYERS: 3-4
PGI SEPTEMBER	GENRE: GOLF

GMR 9/10

BETTER THAN ANY OTHER GOLF GAME
NOT AS GOOD AS... FREE LESSONS FROM TIGER
ON PAR (UNLESS YOU GET SHOTS GOLF FORCE)



GUNGRAVE OVERDOSE

BANG BANG. HE SHOT ME DOWN

MATURE | PS2

In an age where everyone bandies about on topics such as "innovation," "physics," "emotional story arc," and whatnot, it's pretty nice for a game to proclaim its entire design philosophy and story objectives in three words: Kick Their Asses.

Gungrave: Overdose is literally as simple, short, and brutal as a bullet to the head. Yeah, there are some random conversations about finding something called "seed," but everything just falls to the side to make way for shooting aplenty. Much like in the previous game, all you need to do is start at one end of the level and shoot your way to the other end. While many of these levels are confined in corridors, you'll occasionally branch out into larger alleys or really big hallways. You rack up "beat points" by consecutively and uninterruptedly shooting down baddies and then throwing in an occasion megablast of some sort; you also get art points for pulling off stylish maneuvers, like battling back rockets with your coffin.

The last game was criticized for being too short, and this corrects it to a degree by adding more playable characters (who are easy to unlock)

and levels. Credit needs to be given to whomever green-lit the creation of Rocketbilly Redcadillac. While Juji Kabane is also pretty spiffy lit's particularly gratifying to fillet your way through most of the enemies, Rocketbilly Redcadillac's use of a guitar as a weapon is pretty awesome. Hopefully, this will start a trend of more games teaching everyone that music is the ultimate weapon.

Oddly enough, making the game longer presents a different problem: It's way repetitive. The level design, enemies, and overall experience start to blend together into a monotonous whole. Besides most of the enemies and environments looking similar at times, the camera is also a bit spastic (mostly when you're gunning away in a confined room). Even though Gungrave feels exceptionally repetitive and nearly exhausting at times, it's also a mere 15 bucks. So for the price of a bag of popcorn and a ticket for the latest Michael Bay monstrosity, you can instead buy an interactive version of the same experience. Not a bad trade-off, in that respect. **B+**
—Thierry Nguyen



PGI HISTORY	PRICE: \$49.99
ON XBOX ENTERTAINMENT	PLAYERS: 3
ON UNUSABLE NOW	GENRE: ACTION

GMR 7/10

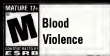
A BIT BETTER THAN GUNGRAVE
A LOT BETTER THAN MOST MICHAEL BAY MOVIES
NEEDS MORE DEADLY MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

GHOST IN THE SHELL™

[STAND ALONE COMPLEX]™

Coming November 2004

ghostintheshell-thegame.com



PlayStation 2



PRODUCTION I.G.



©2004 2004 Bishou Musouken Production I.G./KODANSHA ©2004 Sony Computer Entertainment Inc./BANDAI Production I.G./I.G. All rights reserved. Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex and its characters are trademarks of P. Studio Ltd. The "PS" Family logo is a trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The copyright is a trademark of the Entertainment Software Foundation.

KIRBY & THE AMAZING MIRROR

A PUFF PIECE

EVERYONE | GBA

➔ The new Kirby has a good pedigree—Flagship, the guys behind the *Zelda: Ocarina* games on GBC and the forthcoming *The Minish Cap*, are in charge. This results in a Kirby game uncharacteristically packed with new ideas for the stagnating series.

Technically, the game shines. It's gorgeous, and the control is as spot-on as you'd expect from a Nintendo-published title. Some clever new powers and enemies have been added to the mix, bulking up the Kirby repertoire to contemporary standards.

The problem is the game's core design. The developers went for a *Metroid*-style interlocking-levels approach but flubbed the execution. The levels don't intertwine well; meanwhile, the goals are oddly divorced from obvious targets, like boss fights.

The game has a penchant for kicking you back to the beginning when you "complete" a level, despite the fact that it would be more convenient to see

a series of checkpoints and save rooms, like *Metroid* and *Castlevania* do.

The game's other gimmick—calling in reinforcements from three multicolored Kirbys—doesn't add much. They'll flip a switch for you or attack enemies, but there's nothing essential or particularly helpful about it. On the other hand, you can plug in a Link cable, and some friends control the Kirbys. This is much more satisfying.

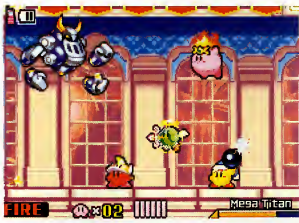
The *Amazing Mirror* has Kirby on the right track and, for the first time in years, starts to evolve the series. It just doesn't quite live up to its ambitions. **C**

_Christian Nutt

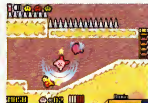
FILE NUMBER	PRICE	\$27.99
DEV. NINTENDO	PLAYERS	1-4
REL. SEPTEMBER	ORIG.	GBA

GMR 7/10

BETTER THAN ANYBY NIGHTMARE IN OCEAN LAND
NOT AS GOOD AS CASTLEVANIA: SPIKE OF SCORCH
WANT FOR IT ZELDA: THE MINISH CAP



➔ This time around, Kirby is joined by a pack of multicolored clones. When they get out of range, you can call 'em on your cell phone and get 'em all. This can be helpful on bosses but doesn't seem to do a heck of a lot of good in general. Much better is the multiplayer, in which every gamer picks a Kirby.



FILE NUMBER	PRICE	\$27.99
DEV. KONAMI	PLAYERS	1-2
REL. SEPTEMBER	ORIG.	JAPAN

GMR 8/10

POSTER GAME FOR PERIPHERALS ON PS2
BETTER THAN EXOTIC GROOVE
NEXT LIKELY ITERATION: DDR UBER-ULTRA-ULTRA-EXTREME

DANCE DANCE REVOLUTION EXTREME

EVERYBODY DANCE NOW

EVERYONE | PS2

➔ *DDR* already had the right formula for a foot-controlled beat-matching game. The trick was what to do for an encore—after all, *DDR* freaks probably already own one of the other versions already available. To its credit, Konami not only came up with challenges for veterans, but also added gameplay for those with two left feet.

First off, *DDR Extreme* has EyeToy support. You can now watch yourself onscreen, plus there are several EyeToy-specific games. If keeping your feet in line isn't challenging enough, try adding two more appendages! Minigames include an EyeToy version of *Breakout*, a game in which you feed animals the proper food by stepping on the appropriate arrow, but with all due speed; and a game in which you step on the right and left arrows like a maniac to shake coconuts from palm trees, then try to catch the coconuts as they fall.

But the highlight is still the dancing. *Extreme* has more songs than ever—more than 65—and includes standards and remixes of hits everyone knows along with dance club fare.

Familiar songs make the moves easier for newbs, but there are plenty of challenges as well. Mission mode throws some formidable feasts at you, like "Get OK on all freeze areas" and "Don't step on any arrows simultaneously" (even when the arrows tell you to do so). It's not as easy as it sounds. A new endless mode lets you keep dancing without having to deal with selection screens between every three songs. And workout mode returns for calorie counters.

With the new modes and new tunes, *Extreme* feels more robust than other versions of *DDR*. It's more accessible—without neglecting its core audience—fancy footwork to be sure. **B+**

_Carrie Shepherd

all formats
ALL THE TIME

unlimited
strategies

Wizards
OF THE
COAST

PRIZES

1000'S
OF CARDS

L
I
V
E

T
O
U
R
N
A
M
E
N
T
S
24/7

W
I
Z
A
R
D
S
O
F
T
W
A
R
E

MAGIC
The Gathering

MAGIC The Gathering ONLINE

ALL
MAGIC
ALL THE TIME

New sets
released

BEST REWARDS

TECHNIQUES OF
MAGIC

MOST COMPETITION

OVER 1000
SUBSCRIBERS



PLACE TO PLAY: WWW.MAGICTHEGATHERING.COM THIS IS THE PLACE TO
M THIS IS THE PLACE TO PLAY: WWW.MAGICTHEGATHERING.COM THIS
E TO PLAY: WWW.MAGICTHEGATHERING.COM THIS IS THE PLACE TO



→ In an unprecedented first for a Star Wars game, you are able to take part in the relatively obscure Battle of Hoth, where the Empire attacked the Rebellion base with the massive AT-ATs, and the Rebels defended with machines called "snowspeeders." Tengues removed from checks, Battlefront's rendition of the writergreen battle is the best to date.

STAR WARS BATTLEFRONT

MASTERING THE UNIVERSE

TEEN | XB [REVIEWED] | PS2

PRODUCED BY LUCASFILM
DEVELOPED BY BUNGIE
PRICE: \$49.99
RELEASE: AVAILABLE NOW
PAGES: 124
DPI: 100

➔ A dream come true for fans who spent their youthful days positioning action figures and making that ubiquitous blaster noise with their mouths ("Picho!"), *Star Wars Battlefront* takes the *Battlefield* 1942 formula and fuses it with the story, characters, and vehicles we all know and love. It also includes prequel stuff.

Though modern combat in the real world is increasingly dependent on automated machines, videogames have yet to reach that level. When playing through the campaigns solo, it's usually up to you to attack, capture, and defend the map's control points. Teammates can't be counted on to do anything vital to the mission, except get themselves

shot and blown up. This is why it's necessary to play online.

If that condition can be met, *Battlefront* can be quite enjoyable as a pick-up-and-play online game. Maps are designed with good balance and most encourage communication and strategy among teammates. They also make one's choice of character type important. If the map is heavy on vehicle use, you'll need a contingent of rocket launchers to defend effectively, and an overwhelming infantry force is usually enough to capture and hold control points. The environments come from both eras of Star Wars: the Galactic Civil War and the Clone Wars. Levels based on the former are

comfortable and familiar, while the latter, though equally well designed, lack any sort of nostalgic appeal.

But since this is the first game of its kind for either of the two consoles, *Battlefront* fills a hole in your online library. It's Star Wars with a proven and well-executed game concept. And if that's not enough to persuade you, you're able to murder Ewoks. Enjoy. **B+**

—Andrew Plister

GMR 8/10

HEY, HOW ABOUT THAT A HOTH LEVEL ON PAR WITH BATTLEFIELD VIETNAM WAIT FOR IT: BATTLEFIELD 2

2ND OPINION

Frequently yelling "Are you almost dodged Swerks rocket!" while playing *Battlefront*—but only with others preferably online—will stand you in good stead with the suckers. All of whom you'll eventually zap down with blasters while having only mildly laggy fun. **B+**
—Greg Orlando

Reviews editor NBR

REVIEWS YOU CAN TRUST

teenage mutant ninja turtles 2 → conflict: vietnam



TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES 2

KEEP IT IN THE SEWERS

TEEN | PS2 (REVIEWED) | XB | DC

There's something wrong with the modern revivals of classic cartoons we've been seeing lately. *Transformers*, *X-Men*, and yes, *Teenage Ninja Turtles*—they've all been revitalized for the viewing pleasure of today's youth. And while they may be better technically, they're completely devoid of the magic that made the originals kick so much ass in comparison. The same can be said for the games these retro revivals have spawned, up to and including *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 2*.

You all know the story by now: Four baby turtles get dipped in some toxic ooze, mutate into fully grown humanoid creatures, and are trained in the ways of flipping out and killing people by their master, Splinter, who happens to be a giant rat. In *TMNT2*, Splinter has been abducted, and it's your job—alone or with up to three friends—to rescue him.

At its core, *TMNT2* is a fairly pedestrian beat-em-up. You'll run through a gauntlet of themed stages, pummeling evil robots and ninjas, collecting random items, and fighting bosses that follow predictable patterns. You control all four turtles in the single-player game, switching between them on the fly; each turtle has special talents, such as Raphael's ability to move heavy objects and Michelangelo's helicopter jump, which come in handy in different places. There are a few other unlockable alternative characters, but they're largely identical to the core four.

Multiplayer games split the duties evenly among the players, though everyone shares a single life bar, which doesn't make a lot of sense.

The problem with this game is that there isn't anything that stands out. The gameplay is strictly by the numbers, with a few weak attempts at breaking up the action with several bonus stages, survival modes, and animation galleries. Speaking of animation, there isn't much—most of the environments are flat and lifeless, and there's really not a lot to see. The animated cut-scenes are OK, but even those have a few audio stutters. In short: Don't expect to be dazzled by the technology here.

Don't get us wrong: *TMNT2* is in most ways an improvement upon its predecessor, but it's still a far cry from the awesome arcade game that came out in the late '80s. Incidentally, that wonderful game is offered as a hidden unlockable here—but it doesn't save *TMNT2* from being a highly mediocre experience. **C-**

—Ryan Scott

PS2 KONAMI	PS2	EST. 89
97 KONAMI	PLACES: 14	
93 KONAMI	99.9	JAPAN

GMR 5 10

SLIGHTLY BETTER THAN THE FIRST ONE NOT AS GOOD AS THE ARCADE GAMES WHAT WE REALLY WANT: KONAMI ARCADE COLLECTION

CONFLICT: VIETNAM

WHEN WERE YOU IN CAMBODIA?

MATURE | PS2 (REVIEWED) | XB

Like it or not, Vietnam is the new World War II, at least as far as games are concerned. Goose-stepping and heroism are out; punji stakes and moral ambiguity are in. *Conflict: Vietnam* is the latest game to ride the trend, and underneath its chunky-looking graphics lurks a decent squad shooter that hits some nicely discordant notes.

A follow-up to the *Conflict: Desert Storm* games, *Vietnam* is the story of four soldiers—a sniper, a machine gunner, a rifleman, and a wet-behind-the-ears medic—who wind up stranded in the jungle during the 1968 Tet Offensive.

Vietnam tries hard not to pull its punches. Its heroes scream profanities as Viet Cong guerrillas swarm out from the underbrush. Other soldiers die in messy ways, and mines and tripwires pop up seemingly out of nowhere. A feeling of desperation sets in as the heroes move deeper into enemy territory, are napalmed by their own side, and run low on ammo. And one of the main characters even smokes a joint. (Sigh)

Still, there's a weird dichotomy at work. You do the VC run out into the open to attack instead of just sniping from the trees? Why, when your squadmates catch grenades with their faces, do they not die but instead write around until someone patches them up? And why is there so little blood?

While it falls short of being as gritty as it thinks it is, *Conflict* compensates with soldiers who act realistically. Players control one hero at a time, with the rest driven by the impressive A.I. There are a few hiccups—like, say, everyone charging into a tripwire right after it's been spotted—but overall, it feels like your squadmates know what they're doing. They shoot straight, they follow your commands, and they only rarely shoot rockets at close range.

If A.I. isn't your thing, up to three friends can take over in the splitscreen co-op mode. It's a great touch that adds a lot of replay value, but online play would have been even better.

Conflict: Vietnam isn't the best Vietnam game out there, nor is it the most shocking [that "honor" belongs to *ShelShock*]. But on its own, it's a good, solid action game with a compelling story, nonstop action, and a deep, dark jungle atmosphere that's easy to get lost in. **C+**

—Mikel Reparaz

PS2 KONAMI	PS2	EST. 89
97 KONAMI	PLACES: 14	
93 KONAMI	99.9	JAPAN

GMR 7 10

BETTER THAN CONFLICT: DESERT STORM ON PS2 WITH FREEDOM FIGHTERS
WILT FOR IT: GHOST RECON 2



DEF JAM FIGHT FOR NY

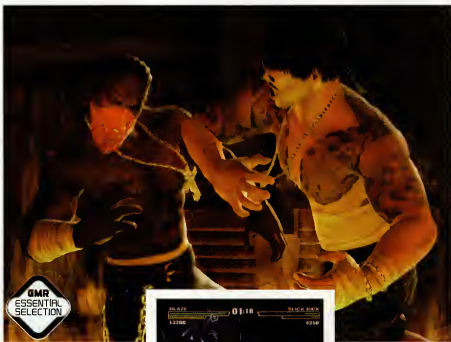
UNLIKELY TO INSPIRE GOOD BEHAVIOR

MATURE | PS2 [REVIEWED] | GC | XB

➔ Your enjoyment of *Def Jam Fight for NY* rests largely in your appreciation of hip-hop, rap culture, and whether you have any friends. A tremendous improvement over last year's *Def Jam Vendetta*, *FFNY* is practically four times the game in terms of content, quality, and playability. This is the fighting game for people who don't like fighting games (like, say, *Virtua Fighter*). But beware to all those who enter here, for within *FFNY* lies a terrible dark side.

Enthusiasts of rap music, be it that of Def Jam's stable or not, will find much to enjoy here. The presentation is top notch, particularly in the customization department. *FFNY* lets you hand-tailor everything about your thug, all the way down to the way in which he wears his jeans (one leg up, round or square buckle, above sneaker or over, etc.), how many layers deep his tattoos are (on all body parts), and what sort of earrings, bracelets, and all-around bling he wears. Tons of brand-name jackets, jerseys, sweaters, shirts, pants, shoes, and shorts are offered from the likes of Eryce, Phat Farm, Sean John, and Marc Ecko, among others.

Customizing your character isn't restricted to his locks, though. Henry Rollins (of the Rollins Band, formerly of Black Flag), of all people, stands in as the local combat instructor, inviting you down to the gym to spend your character-development points on general attribute enhancements (strength, toughness, speed, etc.) and special "blazin'" finishing moves. Since you're able to pick from three of five styles overall (street fighting, kickboxing, martial arts, submission, wrestling), creating a truly unique fighter—a fast striker type, a grappler, or a brawler, to name a few—is little more than a few development points away. This elevates *FFNY* above the standard WYSIWYG type of wrestling or fighting game. Customization is the focus here, and in that, *FFNY* excels. Your blinged-out character translates to the game's lush cut-scenes, right down to every tweaked detail. This helps to keep you engrossed in your character's progress and is superior to anything else like it on the market. Again, if hip-hop is your thing, you'll be in pig heaven here, as the



music, attention to detail, and generous cast of characters (old-school players like Ice-T even make the cut alongside new jacks like Xzibit) show a clear and exhaustive love for the subject material.

However, if you're not a fan of hip-hop, you may be less willing to overlook the game's flaws, which are found primarily in the single-player story mode. It's true that the controls are an improvement over the previous game's due to the flexibility in the combat styles. Additional styles mean additional moves, so how you fight is up to you. Turtles can be countered with a quick throw, and relentless button mashers can find themselves on the receiving end of a rapid reversal that leaves them open to further punishment. Crowd interaction spices up the fighting by offering you weapons to use on your assailants in the form of beer bottles, crowbars, tire irons, baseball bats, and other less social forms of affection. Players can also throw their opponents into the crowd for extrabrutal pseudo-tag-team moves, but

➔ *Def Jam Fight for NY*'s roster is excellent, from Henry Rollins and Flavor Flav to Carmen Electra and Slick Rick...





be careful, as this tactic can also be used against you. Backgrounds, which are still mostly simple geometric shapes, offer additional ways to inflict pain, primarily by slamming your foe's head into the offending object (jukebox, steel girder, car, etc.). *FFNY* is everything Square's *The Bouncer* ever wanted to be and more. All of this brutal versatility sounds like good fun, and provided you have the aforementioned friends to punish in the game's extensive list of multiplayer options, it is. If you are restricted to living the life of an up-and-coming thug in the single-player options, though, have the Vicks throat lozenges at the ready, as you will most assuredly holler "BULLS**IT!" on many, many occasions.

While last year's *Vendetta* suffered from an inefficient targeting system, *FFNY* rectifies that minor glitch. But for the one thing it fixes, it manages to introduce four times the cheapness. Pounding an opponent (or, conversely, being pounded yourself!) against a wall or solid object basically stuns him, leaving him open for further attacks. The problem with this is that your character's back and the walls and solid objects seem to be made of magnets, meaning that should you be in the vicinity of either, you're going to catch an unfair beating. Likewise, certain characters (like the impossibly fat Fat Joe) seem to block everything. Sure you can counter that simply by throwing them, but should you dare to block one of their relentless attacks, you're setting yourself up for an

instant throw. More typically, you'll find yourself in an inescapable chain of events, most of which are canned animations so lengthy that you'll probably want to go grab a snack while they finish. The game lacks enough ways to get yourself out of these sorry circumstances. The most effective "technique" is to dribble on the buttons and hope your character punches his way out of a hold or gets his ass off the ground. These issues are less transparent when fighting against live competition and not the CPU, but they're there nevertheless, and many controllers will be broken in tribute to *FFNY*'s overly cheap AI.

Of course, that's assuming you're willing to believe that Busta Rhymes is the second coming of Bruce Lee in the first place. It's incredibly satisfying to shut down the endless procession of smack-talking egos and extinguish the bagdadocio. But it's doubly frustrating to pummel your way to the top through the aforementioned story mode. The overall quality of the game is substantial, and it's worth it to unlock everything in the story mode, if only to use the goods in the fabulous multiplayer options. But various artificially induced frustrations hold the game back from its true potential. Still, it's nearly there, and for those with strong jaws, it's an otherwise exceptional experience. The next game should be unstoppable, but it better wear feature Eric B. and Rakim. **B+**

—James Mielke



2ND OPINION

I'm far less forgiving of cheap and frustrating artificial intelligence (as it tends to kill motivations, but *Fight for NY*'s overall excellence and great presentation cannot be denied. My hopes for *Def Jam Fight for NY* online play and the ability to beat the crap out of Fred Durst. **B+**

—Andrew Plaster

THE ELECTRONIC ARTS	PRICE	\$49.99
DEV: ARI ORGANIZATION	PLAYED	1-4
RELEASABLE FOR	GENRE	FIGHT

GMR 9¹⁰

BETTER THAN GALACTIC WRESTLING
NOT AS GOOD AS SOUL CALIBUR II
WAIT FOR IT: TEXAN 5

→ Come on, ladies. You're both very pretty.

AGE COMBAT™ & The Official War & © 2004 NAMCO LTD. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. All trademarks and copyrights associated with the manufacturers, artists, models, trade names, brands and/or logos are the property of their respective owners, and used with their permission. Wingman Command is a trademark of the publisher, Namco Bandai Games Inc. Wingman Command is a trademark of the publisher, Namco Bandai Games Inc. Wingman Command is a trademark of the publisher, Namco Bandai Games Inc. WINGMAN is an acronym and registered trademark of TMS/EMUL SYSTEMS. Wingman Command is a trademark of the publisher, Namco Bandai Games Inc. Wingman Command is a trademark of the publisher, Namco Bandai Games Inc. Wingman Command is a trademark of the publisher, Namco Bandai Games Inc.

MSX-2 USE: OHT-65B



Issue orders and coordinate squadron attacks with split-second precision.

EAS USE: OHT-80B2D



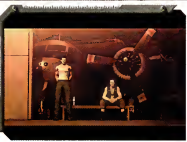
Pilot 50 licensed, authentically detailed planes and choose your aircraft colors.

ZF-4 USE: CHN-3022A



Dogfight and dive-bomb in air, sea and land assaults across more than 30 missions.

AL-2 USE: PHL-0725A



Engage in an epic story with multiple game modes and unlockable extras.

WHICH MEANS YOUR COMMANDS MUST BE TAKEN

EVEN FASTER

Control your elite fighter squadron moment-by-moment using Wingman Command to turn the tides of war.

LEADING PIONEER
RP
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Visit www.esrb.org
for updated rating
information.

OFFICIAL GUIDE
AVAILABLE FROM
BRADYGAMES
THEY'VE GOT YOUR BACK.





PlayStation.2

namco

www.namco.com

IN A DOGFIGHT AT 900 MPH, YOUR LIFE CAN BE TAKEN IN A

SPLIT SECOND





ACE COMBAT 5
THE UNSUNG WAR

OWN THE SKIES: OCTOBER 25, 2004

PRE-ORDER FROM EBGAMES.COM - [HTTP://ACESCOMBAT5.NAMCO.COM](http://ACESCOMBAT5.NAMCO.COM)



TERMINATOR 3: THE REDEMPTION

THE FUTURE REPEATS ITSELF

MATURE | XB [REVIEWED] | PS2

➔ One of the prevailing themes in the Terminator films is that no matter what, the future is written in stone, and despite one's best attempts, there is only one eventual outcome. The same could be said for any game based on a movie, so it will be interesting to see if one based on Terminator fulfills such a destiny.

Right off the bat, the designers made the right choice by basing the game on what was the most exciting part of the movie: the chase sequences. The game is broken into three modes of play: shooting while driving, on-rails shooting, and hand-to-hand combat. Easily the best of the three is the shooting-while-driving segments, in which one must plow through various environments (and multitudes of robotic soldiers) and gun down the opposition in a variety of vehicles, from futuristic tanks to a hearse. The on-rails shooting is actually more fun than expected, but the on-foot melee is where things start falling apart, thanks to bad animation, inconsistent enemy A.I., and awkward controls.

It's obvious that the designers wanted all three very different modes of gameplay to share similar controls for a more cohesive experience, but this comes at the cost of at least one. And some will find the method for controlling a vehicle while shooting manageable, while others are guaranteed to hate it.

Also annoying is the Terminator

himself; sound clips of Arnold are distributed liberally throughout the game, and while it may seem ridiculous to complain that he sounds like a robot (since that's what he's portraying), he's more like a robot phoning it in. And the whole game eventually becomes rather monotonous, despite attempts at adding replay value.

It's obvious that everyone involved tried very hard to make a game that would live up to expectations and the legacy of the action-packed Terminator franchise, but they simply couldn't save *Redemption* from its apparent destiny: mediocrity. **C-**
—**Matthew Hawkins**



PG-13
AGE 13+ PARENTAL STRONG CAUTION
REASON: LANGUAGE, DRUGS, AND
SMOKING

REVIEWED BY
GMR 5/10

BETTER THAN '93 RISE OF THE MACHINES
MIGHT WANT TO TRY FUTURE SHOCK
WHAT THE WORLD REALLY WANTS: A CONAN THE
BARBARIAN GAME

HEADHUNTER: REDEMPTION

IRREDEEMABLE

MATURE | XB [REVIEWED] | PS2

➔ *Headhunter* hit the dying Dreamcast back in 2001 and was eventually ported to PS2. The sequel, *Redemption*, is set 20 years after the original and continues the tale of vigilante cop Jack Wade. Unlike in the first game, Jack's no longer alone. This time around, he has the street-smart Leeza X by his side, and players swap between both characters as the story dictates. The setting is a dystopic world that has been shattered by an earthquake into two halves: There's the bright and technologically advanced Above, where upstanding citizens live, and the sunless, gritty Below, inhabited by crooks and miscreants. Below, however, is restless, and a rebellion is brewing.

Headhunter: Redemption is sort of like *Metroid Gear Solid* in that players scan the environment looking for clues, breakable walls, and information about the impending revolt. When they're not scanning the world, they keep an eye on the radar system that displays the orientation of enemies, who can be disposed of via stealth attacks or open

gunfire. Standard weapons such as pistols, rifles, grenades, and shotguns form the player's arsenal, and security codes are hacked by solving LSAT-type brainteasers that involve pattern recognition. While this sounds great on paper, it doesn't play out that way.

Redemption is hampered by extremely loose control, a targeting system that fails to lock on at close range, and repetitive play. Production values are also a mixed bag: Jack's voice is rich and textured, but Leeza sounds like a winy castoff from *Beverly Hills 90210*. Supposedly lethal resistance fighters utter phrases such as "I'm gonna get you" and "You're dead meat, *Headhunter*."

But the biggest problem is pacing. Simply put, *Headhunter: Redemption* is monotonous and dull. It's *Silent Hill* without the fear, *Metroid Gear* without the story, *Kill Switch* without the intensity. Running around and finding fuses to open steel doors works only if the rest of the game is truly inspired—but *Redemption* falls flat. **C-**

—**Doug Trueman**



PG-13 AGE 13+ PARENTAL STRONG CAUTION REASON: LANGUAGE, DRUGS, AND SMOKING	PG-13 AGE 13+ PARENTAL STRONG CAUTION REASON: LANGUAGE, DRUGS, AND SMOKING
GMR	NEW WORLD 4 ¹⁰
NOT AS GOOD AS PS2-OPS ALSO TRY GHOST HUNTER WAIT FOR IT RESIDENT EVIL 4	





→ Everything blows up so good. *Otogi 2* is the ultimate sandbox, since the Xbox hard-drive remembers your every destructive instinct and saves the damage you do to each level. Any time you revisit a level, with any character, the damage remains, and levels remain exactly as you left it. Don't take our word for it. Try it!



GMR
ESSENTIAL
SELECTION



LOTOGI 2

THE LUSH LIFE

TEEN | XB

→ The first *Otogi* was a beautiful, fuel-injected slice of sheer carnage that oozed style and offered nonstop action. It was also one of the few games to put the Xbox hard drive to good use (the game would remember destruction caused in previous levels and retain the damage during revisits). Tragically, the game wasn't as successful (in either the North American or Japanese market) as it should have been, which makes it even more surprising that developer From Software would pour so much energy into this highly improved sequel.

While the game's undead hero Raikou returns, this time he does so with the help of five other playable warriors (who resurrect him by sacrificing themselves). This varied cast isn't just for show. Each one plays remarkably different, and your choice will affect how easy each stage is. That's deceptive thinking, though, because the stages get progressively harder early on. Mission objectives as simple as "get to the deepest part of the cave" are hampered by overly large levels that can be confusing to navigate. The soul system that requires players to harvest as many spirits as possible to prevent an untimely demise keeps the game's pace up-tempo,

but it creates a hectic tension that saps some of the fun, much in the way the original *Pikmin* imposed a time limit on players. Still, for these warts and bumps, *Otogi 2* is top-notch entertainment.

Your enjoyment of this game will correlate directly to whether you dig the highly Japanese flourishes and style. No Western designer could have created a character who is essentially a tree stump with a ship's wheel attached to it. However, if this is your bag, *Otogi 2* offers up some of the most lavish ass-kicking destruction around. **B+**

—James Mielke

PG-13
DEV FROM SOFTWARE
PUB AVAILABLE NOW

PRICE \$59.99
PLAYERS 1
GENRE ACTION

GMR

BETTER THAN DEVIL MAY CRY 2
NOT AS GOOD AS NINJA GAIDEN
ALSO TRY CRIMSON TEARS 9920

9th

FULL SAIL
Real World Education

Game Design & Development
Bachelor of Science
Degree Program



Associate of Science &
Bachelor of Science
Degree Programs

school of

- ▶ Computer Animation
- ▶ Digital Media
- ▶ Entertainment Business
- ▶ Film
- ▶ Game Design & Development
- ▶ Recording Arts
- ▶ Show Production & Touring

800.226.7625
fullsail.com

3300 University Boulevard
Winter Park, FL 32792

Financial aid available to those who qualify.
All programs accredited.
Accredited College, AACCSC

© 2010 Full Sail. All rights reserved. "Full Sail," "Full Sail University" and "Full Sail" are either registered marks or trademarks of Full Sail University.



→ Whether you fight the demons (below) or become one (above), you'll have plenty of options in battle. Covenant is check-full of dozens of tiny secrets.



SHADOW HEARTS: COVENANT

PROVING THAT WWI IS MUCH COOLER THAN WWII

TEEN | PS2

➔ After a year of mixed releases from Square Enix, a *Final Fantasy*-style RPG in 2004 seems a distant dream. *Shadow Hearts: Covenant* proves to be a more than competent contender for the FF crown and the most enjoyable cinematic RPG since *Xenosaga*. Who knew?

Whether or not you played the original doesn't matter much. And that's a good thing, as this is an RPG that just about anybody should be able to enjoy. Those sick of the whiny heroes of *Final Fantasy* will appreciate the sarcastic and powerful lead Yuri, who can fuse with the souls of demons and wreck ass. But if you enjoy the presentation and gameplay of Square's games, they're here, too.

Covenant, in fact, is the first RPG in recent memory to have a pervasive sense of humor. In turns, it's wacky and sarcastic, dopey and clever, and it works. When the story turns serious about halfway through, it's just as entertaining—if not more so. Its cast of heroes and villains is extremely charismatic and appealing.

But the gameplay is what will make or break *Covenant* for you; to be honest, it's nothing new. But the game is so chock-full of clever little intertwined ideas that you won't mind. Everywhere you turn, there's something new to do or a corner of the world to explore and find a new special item. Each of the characters has a unique skill set to

match his or her personality, ensuring hours of diversions.

Covenant illustrates that execution is just as important as innovation. It brings together a host of gameplay systems with a fascinating plot set against the backdrop of World War I, and it never quite takes itself seriously enough to be a bore. Square Enix, at least for 2004, has been beaten at its own game. **B+**

—Christian Nutt

2ND OPINION

SHC is easily the funniest traditional RPG on PS2. The gameplay isn't all that (for me the combat got a bit repetitive), but the sheer oddity of the characters and the story lines help propel SHC above its mediocrity. You have to give it credit for having a superhero vampire wrestler as a party member. **B+**
—Thierry Nguyen
Previous editor.
GMM

GMR NEWS 8/10

BETTER THAN STAR OCEAN. TELL THE END OF THE NOT AS GOOD AS FINAL FANTASY X WAIT FOR IT: FINAL FANTASY XI!

MEGA MAN ZERO 3

ZERO TOLERANCE

EVERYONE | GBA

➔ Mega Man has evolved quite a bit over the past 17 years, from globetrotting robot smasher to internet-surfing virus hunter.

The *Mega Man Zero* series was designed to take things "back to its roots," but as with many other old-school games (like shooters), the designers seem unable to push the gameplay, so they simply made things excessively hard. Though it does try at times not to, *Zero 3* still follows this path.

The third chapter builds upon the events of previous games. You're Zero, a robot thrust a hundred years into the future, where a tyrannical regime is ruled by your former best friend and partner, Mega Man X. The narrative has always been this particular *Mega Man* series' strongest point, but you're playing for the action, not the story, and the action here is hard. The level of challenge is not as daunting as before, but it's still far too much for most people's tastes.

Like in previous *Mega Man* games, the basic formula is intact: You fight a boss, get its weapon, and then use it against the next one. But another means to enhance abilities is by acquiring "elves," though to an extremely limited degree (use an elf once, and it's gone). Plus, the means of managing elves isn't made clear and feels awkward, almost to the point of not being worth the

trouble. A new idea for the series is going into cyberspace at key level points, which allows extended usability for the elves, but the whole idea seems both underdeveloped and a poor excuse for allowing replaying levels.

The same vague RPG-like characteristics from before are also back—this time they allow portions of Zero's body to be enhanced—but again, it's needlessly complex. As for the rest, the game looks and sounds much like before, though it's still decent by today's standards. And again, boss encounters are both overwhelming and glodding.

Zero fans will likely enjoy this one—especially when they find out who the last boss is. But Capcom should reconsider its attempts at making a small, hardcore audience happy, and instead think of making changes that would not only get more people interested in the series, but also make the game better as a whole. **B+**

—Matthew Hawkins

THE GAME PLAYERS 4.2
 THE WEAPONS PLAYERS 4.2
 THE ENEMIES PLAYERS 4.2
 THE STORY PLAYERS 4.2

FROM THE FRONTS
GMR 6 ^{7/10}

BETTER THAN MEGA MAN X?
 ON PAR WITH BOTH PREVIOUS MEGA MAN
 ZERO GAMES
 LOOK INTO MEGA MAN ANNIVERSARY COLL.



MEGA MAN X: COMMAND MISSION

BATTLE BOTS

TEEN | PS2 [REVIEWED] | GC

➔ The easiest, quickest way to ruin *Mega Man X: Command Mission* for yourself is to play a lot of it in one sitting. If you don't take it slow, you start to notice things. Like maybe you get restless with how long every single random battle takes, or you get tired of yet more D-grade voice acting from Capcom, or you get bored of the nonsensical, angst-filled story line so tiresomely common to the *Mega Man X* series.

So our advice is to take it slow. That way, you get to experience *Command Mission* as an interesting alternate take on the *Mega Man X* franchise: one without the nonlinear stages or the traditional weapon gathering, but one with a well-crafted battle engine that combines split-second timing with strategic use of your forces.

This is most evident with the healing system, the area in which *Command Mission* most resembles its team's earlier effort, *Dragon Quarter*. You heal by expending a certain percentage of one of your sub-tanks, but your supply is severely limited, and replenishments tend to be both small and hard to come by. You probably won't die at the hands of normal enemies, but the constant chipping away at your sub-tank energy is enough to make you worried. The best part occurs when party members are at low health but just about to gain a level, which will refill their HP again—do you sweat it out in battle and risk

death, or do you spend some of your precious sub-tank energy, knowing that you're essentially pouring it down the drain?

So the battle system is built on a good foundation, although there is a problem: Oftentimes, the enemies have such high HP that the only way to make a dent is to use your special attacks against them. Since the special attacks need charging, and because using your normal attack eats into your charge a little bit, waiting for your special to come up again can get tedious—and when you factor that tedious into battle after battle, it can be grating.

Command Mission is an interesting experiment that doesn't work 100 percent, but it's nice to see Capcom at least make the effort to branch out with the *Mega Man* games. If we could just get a third *Legends* game using this engine, then series fans would really have something to cheer about. **B+**

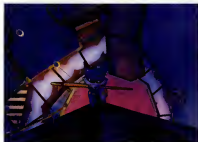
—Nich Maragos

THE CAPCOM DESIGNERS PLAYERS 4.5
 THE STORY PLAYERS 4.5
 THE WEAPONS PLAYERS 4.5
 THE ENEMIES PLAYERS 4.5

FROM THE FRONTS
GMR 7 ¹⁰

BETTER THAN REGULAR MEGA MAN X?
 WORSE THAN SHEN MESAMI TENSEI
 WAIT FOR IT KINGDOM HEARTS 3

→ The game's objectives are what sets it apart from many other action titles: Sly uses a paragon to land on moving trains and distract Carmelita Fox during a heist with a tango. Bentley defeats enemies by hacking computer systems via Combat for the Atari 2600. The Murray impersonates a Canadian moose to infiltrate a remote control tank competition and even uses grappling hooks to cheat as Sly completes in an ice climbing contest.



SLY 2: BAND OF THIEVES

PRINCE OF PURSES

EVERYONE | PS2

PUBLISHER: SONY
DEVELOPER: SICKLE PUNCH
PRICE: \$59.99
RELEASE: AVAILABLE NOW
PLAYERS: 1
OS: PS2

➔ The original *Sly Cooper* was a sleeper hit on PS2, starring the masked mammal as he explored the globe trying to recover the pages of his family's stolen burglar manifesto. The ending saw the destruction of the robotic Clockwerk, but Sly's fear that his nemesis will be reassembled has driven him to steal the pieces from their present owners.

Players control all three members of the band of thieves this time around and employ their various abilities as a sort of Robin Hood turned *Animal Farm*. Sly Cooper uses stealth and cunning, Bentley relies on high technology, and "The Murray" pummels enemies with his fists. Carmelita Fox, representing

both the long arm of the law and Sly's love interest, is also back.

Band of Thieves is firmly rooted in the original game's design, and its few kinks have been hammered out. The sequel replaces the original hub/mission level design with vast city-states set across the globe where the action takes place. Objectives include planting bugs (which are actual insects), pickpocketing keys, sabotage, and computer hacking. Levels are challenging without being frustrating, and minigames—like Sly's tango with Carmelita—are original and charming.

It's hard to find fault with *Band of Thieves*. The graphics are beautiful, the characters original, the story

entertaining, and the control dead-on. Controlling Sly as he effortlessly scampers across a wire or hearing Bentley scream "Datatrophe!" as his remote-controlled helicopter takes massive damage raises gaming to an art form almost on par with *The Legend of Zelda*. *Sly 2* is a class act on every level and a title to which other development houses should aspire. **A-**

—Doug Trueman

GMR SCORE 9/10

NOT AS GOOD AS ZELDA: THE WIND WAKER
ON PAR WITH RATCHET & CLANK
WAIT FOR IT: JAK 3

2ND OPINION

Gameplay is intuitive—missions provide as much variety as you're ever going to get from a platform game and it expands the types of play available in the first game. Plus it's pretty, it's original, and it's funny. What else can you really ask of a game? **A-**
—Dane Jongsomwong
Managing editor
OPM



TREE SAP MAY HARM CONTROLLER.



AFTERGLOW PRO
for Xbox™



AFTERGLOW PRO
for PlayStation®2



AFTERGLOW PRO
for GameCube™



PELICAN
PERFORMANCE

visit us on the web at
www.pelicanperformance.com



Pelican and its logo are registered trademarks of Pelican Associates. Gamecube™ is a registered trademark of Nintendo of America. Xbox is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation. PlayStation2 is a registered trademark of Sony Computer Entertainment. All products featured are manufactured by Pelican Associates and are not endorsed by Nintendo of America, Microsoft Corporation, or Sony Computer Entertainment.

DONKEY KONGA

BANG ON THE DRUMS ALL DAY

EVERYONE | GC

➔ Not since *Samba de Amigo's* maracas for Dreamcast has there been a more enticing videogame peripheral than *Donkey Konga's* DK Bongos. Young and old alike flock to the bongos like pigeons to popcorn. Well, as Longfellow said, "Music is the universal language of mankind."

Konga's premise is easy enough for even preschoolers to get a handle on: Clap or hit the right, left, or both bongos as color-coded symbols reach the onscreen target. *Donkey Konga* really tries hard to appeal to a range of ages and tastes with music all over the board: "On the Road Again," "Oye Como Va," "Whip It," and "All the Small Things" are alongside tunes like "Itsy Bitsy Spider," "Pokémon Theme," and even "Hungarian Dance No. 5 in G Minor." Though seemingly schizophrenic, at least there's breadth to the 33 selections.

Konga is at its best with four players each playing different beats of a tune in jam mode. When the players are good,

there's a satisfying synchronicity; when they're bad, uproarious hilarity. Two players can also battle to see who's a better drummer or work together in challenge mode to see how many songs in a row they can clear.

Unfortunately, the novelty wears off and *Konga* becomes repetitive, especially without other bongo owners. The minigames are very basic and don't extend the game all that much. *Konga* is definitely fun, but it doesn't go much beyond tapping to the beat. **C-**

—Carrie Shepherd

THE BATTERY	PRICE	SHIP. INC.	1 DRUM SET
BY: NINTENDO	PLACES: 14		
BY: NINTENDO	GENRE: JAPAN		
BY: NINTENDO			

GMR 7/10

NOT AS GOOD AS HANGOVER REVOLUTION
NOT AS WEIRD AS SAMBA DE AMIGO
WAIT FOR IT: TARDI DRUM MASTER



MARIO PINBALL LAND

IT'S A-ME...BORING A-YOU!

EVERYONE | GBA

➔ *Mario Pinball Land* is a nicely imagined twist on the Mario franchise, combining platform adventuring with GBA-friendly pinball and deftly weaving in all the characters and settings from the lovable world of that avuncular Italian plumber.

It's also a monumental bore. How does MPL accomplish this? It's not due to the premise. This isn't a traditional pinball game, and that's OK. With the exception of the hitting-a-ball-with-flippers part, MPL is nothing like, say, the outstanding *Pokémon Pinball*. GBAers shouldn't expect a classic pinball-table layout or the usual bings and ding-dings that accompany it.

Levels are always in full view—no scrolling—and there's always another level waiting where players can find bosses and/or extra coins for purchasing power-ups. They are competently designed and neatly populated with all the usual Mario

suspects: koopa troops, goombas, boos, porcupuffers, and piranha plants among them. There are power-ups aplenty, though there's no inventory capability, so it's a use-it-or-lose-it proposition.

Sounds good so far, right? Problem is, the actual play mechanics make for a dull affair: Players will be wishing for more bumpers and hazards and—well, just more of everything. Ball and flipper physics in particular fall flat. It's sooo sloooooow, and the flipper action is not very forgiving. Players have to be fairly precise when hitting the ball, and forget any chance of hitting it really hard and watching it go berzerk—bing! bing! bing!—all over the playing field. It just won't happen.

Like any good adventure, MPL does compel players to find out what happens next. But if the Journey is the reward, players might be wise to reserve a sleeper car. **C-**

—Tom Byron

© 2004 Sierra Entertainment, Inc. All rights reserved. "Leisure Suit Larry" and the Sierra logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Sierra Entertainment, Inc. "The Game" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment, Inc. "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment, Inc. All other trademarks are property of their respective owners.

Coming... Soon!



Most loads of hot babes!



A dozen swingin' games like quarters.

Pre-Order at
EBGAMES
videogame boutique
&
GameStop
for a **FREE**
Bonus DVD!

LEISURE SUIT
LARRY
— MAGNA CUM LAUDE —



PlayStation 2





→ Unlike the deceptive lightning newcomer A.B.A. (pronounced "Aiba"), it's actually a girl, albeit a girl with a giant, sentient key that transforms according to the player's whims (and skills), intriguing, but difficult to master.

GMR
ESSENTIAL
SELECTION

GUILTY GEAR ISUKA

ALL HANDS ON DECK

TEEN | PS2

➔ Given that the fighting genre essentially stopped evolving 10 years ago, it's encouraging to see developers like Arc System Works give it their best shot with games like *Guilty Gear Isuka*. It's not like the competition is especially stiff these days, but even if it were, *Isuka* would stand tall among its peers.

Isuka has been a long time in coming. Having released some 5 million marginally different *Street Fighter II*-esque semisequels to *Guilty Gear X* over the past few years (culminating in the recent Xbox release *Guilty Gear X2 #Releard*), Arc was overdue to deliver a true *Guilty Gear* sequel. *Isuka* delivers. Taking a page out of the Marvel vs.

Capcom playbook, *Isuka* goes one better by allowing up to four characters (and five players, with a MultiTap) to fight against each other simultaneously in any combination (i.e., 2-on-2, 3-on-1, free-for-all, etc.). Action takes place in traditional 2D style, except in *Isuka*, you're able to move in and out of the foreground, à la *Real Bout Fatal Fury*. The drawback to this is that with all the backflips and insanity taking place at once, the foreground and background aren't distinct enough, making it hard to tell whether you're properly aligned. The other new mechanism—pressing the L1 button to switch which direction you're facing—isn't as responsive as it should be in a game as frantic as this.

Still, the other extra modes (including a side-scrolling *Streets of Rage* bonus game) and the quirky new character A.B.A. are welcome additions. The create-a-character mode in which you customize your very own Robo-Ky from the ground up further broadens the game's hardcore appeal. Perhaps not groundbreaking, *Isuka* is value-packed to the gills. **A-**

—James Mielke

GMR
9¹⁰

BETTER THAN: JOJO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE
NOT AS GOOD AS: STREET FIGHTER III: THIRD STRIKE
WAIT FOR IT: CAPCOM FIGHTING EVOLUTION

2ND OPINION

The cool thing about the previous *Guilty Gear* games is that there was always some method to what looked like complete fighting madness. But *Isuka*'s prominent new feature, the four player mode, throws that out the window since these matches often involve frantic button-mashing. SM. It's quite fun and the extra modes are a hoot. **A-**
—Giancarlo Ierantini
News editor GMM

SPIDER-MAN 2[™]

THE GAME



Defeat Doc Ock[™] in Spider-Man 2[™] The Game

Swing through the city skyline to foil your ingenious nemesis. Race through 5 fully 3D environments and combat a variety of enemies in 15 challenging 2D environments. Explore a world filled with power-ups, secrets and special items. Post your high scores exclusively through the N-Gage[™] Arena. Mobile gaming on the new pocket-size N-Gage[™] QD and N-Gage[™] game decks.

n-gage.com

N-GAGE QD
NOKIA

anyone
anywhere

EA GAMES

MARVEL
COLUMBIA
PICTURES

ACTIVISION
SPIDER-MAN

N-GAGE
ARENA

TEEN
1

Copyright © 2004 Nokia. All rights reserved. Nokia, N-Gage, N-Gage Arena and N-Gage QD are trademarks or registered trademarks of Nokia Corporation. Spider-Man and all related characters, TM & © 2004 Marvel Characters, Inc. Spider-Man 2, the movie, © 2004 Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc. Published by Activision Publishing, Inc. Game code: © 2004 Activision, Inc. Activision is a registered trademark of Activision, Inc. and its affiliates. All rights reserved. Other product or company names mentioned herein may be trademarks of their respective owners.

ADVANCE GUARDIAN HEROES

MAYBE SEQUELS AREN'T ITS THING

EVERYONE | OBA

Give credit to Treasure for breaking its prickly "no sequel" policy to give the *Guardian Heroes* concept another go-round. Applaud the company for not merely regurgitating the qualities that made the original Sega Saturn game such a blast. And once you've basked in the hardcore glow of *Advance Guardian Heroes'* mere existence, bristle with indignation at its unforgiving difficulty.

The few who remember the classic Saturn game will grow teary eyed at the mere thought of the three-tiered arena where players would hop back and forth, fighting enemies on different planes. These same players will recall the innovative A.I. of your comrade-in-arms [you could control his aggression level on the fly], the undead hero who rose from his grave and stayed by your side throughout the entire game. Chances are, if your gaming experience dates back to 1996 and favored the Saturn, you might even grow teary eyed at the thought of the original cast of characters: Han, Randy, Ginjiro, Nicole, and Serena. Well, fans of the original game might as well scream because *Guardian Heroes* in the advanced sense bears little resemblance to the game that redefined side-scrolling beat-em-ups almost 10 years ago.

That the cast of characters is entirely new (and much less distinct than the first game's warrior, ninja, and mage) is far less an issue than the

fact that the undead hero is no longer a controllable ally; rather, his "spirit" embodies you for the duration, making this a lonesome stroll through brawlerland. Of course, one can connect with a friend via a Link cable, which is good fun, given the game's diverse move list, but while *Guardian Heroes* offers a variety of moves, they're not as intuitive as the original's *Street Fighter*-esque repertoire.

Another disappointment is the futuristic setting, which contrasts sharply with memories of the quaint hamlets and woodland battles of days gone by. But even when not leveraged against wonders of the past, *Advance Guardian Heroes'* levels come in short, overly difficult bursts that routinely send you hurtling back to the title screen with whatever health you had when you hit the last checkpoint, be it a full bar or a mere sliver. This basically railroads whatever fun is to be had in the RPG-like character development system. A pity, that. **—James Mielke**

THE MIGHTY	TYPE: 2D RP
DEV: NINJA	PUBLISHER: S&B
DEV AVAILABLE NOW	DEV: JAPAN

GMR 6¹⁰

BETTER THAN RIVER CITY RANSOM
NOT AS GOOD AS CASTLEMANIA AREA OF SORROW
WAIT FOR IT: ALIEN HOMOGENE (PS2)



POKÉMON FIRE/RED & LEAF/GREEN

CATCH 'EM ALL AGAIN

EVERYONE | OBA

Although Nintendo never comes right out and says it, *Pokémon FireRed/LeafGreen* is a remake of *Pokémon Red/Blue*, the two games that started the whole electronic-rat craze six years ago. This little omission is probably for the better—hardcore series fans know what they're getting into already, and your 10-year-old cousin Todd won't really care either way.

So what's new here for the dedicated Pokénut, then? Surprisingly little, when you get down to it. The remake looks essentially like last year's *Pokémon Ruby/Sapphire*—a bit more color, but not a drastic improvement over the old Game Boy days—and all of RBS' new features, like 2-on-2 battles, are standard issue. There's a revamped Pokédex that's a bit more useful than before, as well as a full help system you can call up anytime you like. Otherwise, it's the same, right down to the nutty old guy who teaches you how to catch Pokémon by beating one into submission for you near the beginning of the game. (This title may be a little too close to the original, actually—many towns seem barren, and a lot of *Red/Blue's* stilted dialogue was ported over to the remake intact.)

This doesn't seem like the sort of thing you'd pay \$35 for until you realize two things: Pokémon's still addictive—almost maddeningly so—and the wireless multiplayer support is the best thing that ever happened to

the series. Every *FireRed/LeafGreen* comes packed with a wireless adapter that lets you play four-person battles without fiddling around with cables. The technology almost seems like a preview of the Nintendo DS' wireless capabilities (and, hopefully, a preview of a DS *Pokémon* game)—up to 40 people can join an online lobby at once, trading monsters and chatting with each other, and the whole thing works perfectly as long as everyone stays within 30 feet of each other. It's just a shame the adapter doesn't work with *Ruby/Sapphire*; if you want a full *Pokémon* collection, you'll still have to break out the cables when trading between games.

If you're expecting a great revolution with Pokémon by this point, don't bother. (The upcoming *Emerald* apparently has real animation in the battles.) However, if you like wasting small bits of time here and there with your GBA—and especially if you're new to the series—this is still the best thing you can get on the portable. **—Kevin Gifford**

THE MIGHTY	TYPE: 2D RP
DEV: NINJA	PUBLISHER: S&B
DEV AVAILABLE NOW	DEV: JAPAN

GMR 8¹⁰

BETTER THAN ALL THE CLONES COMBINED
NOT QUITE AS GOOD AS RUBY/SAPPHIRE
WAIT FOR IT: A DS POKÉMON

((ONLY YOU CAN SILENCE YOURSELF))

Make them hear you. Register to vote now at: www.DeclareYourself.com

**DECLARE
YOURSELF**
www.DeclareYourself.com

ANDRÉ 3000  DAVID LACHAPPELLE





PS4 BLUE
BUY DIGITAL
EEL BROWD

TIME: 00:11
PLAYERS: 2
DRIVER: JAMM

GMR 7/10

WAGES US WANT A NEW B.C. PRO-AM
ON PAR WITH OUR BATTLE JAC
WAIT FOR IT CHORO Q OS

CHOROQ A RACING GAME THAT'S MOSTLY CAR

EVERYONE | PS2

➔ There's a point early in *ChoroQ* when the player enters Yarg's church and is told, "God is always watching over you." These sorts of comforting words are unusual in a videogame; then again, *ChoroQ* is sort of an unusual videogame, but a good one to be sure.

ChoroQ, which is based on the popular Japanese toy cars (known as Penny Racers here) and other games by Takara, has a look and feel that screams "Teh Kiddo." This juvenile veneer belies an RPG/racing game with depth. It's one of those "forever" games: play for hours in either the RPG or racing mode with little boredom—or, for that matter, completion.

Racing is basically *ChoroQ*'s combat system. Norahike's garage provides access to a wide variety of races, and this is where *ChoroQ* gets particularly fun. Gamers can choose races from easy to hard and, through upgrades, take on increasingly greater challenges.

For instance, one race features snow patches and a small lake. At first, the car slips and slides or slo-mos at the bottom of the lake. But with the skis and water propeller upgrades installed, the car is soon skimming across the surface of the lake and carving up the snow. This sort of thing goes on in something like 160 tracks in which players can also unlock dozens of new cars. There is a nice assortment of track designs, and some are awesome. It's easy to get so caught up in the racing side that the RPG side gets forgotten. This is a fact, but not a flaw.

As an RPG, *ChoroQ* is obviously no *Final Fantasy*. As a racing game, it's no *Gran Turismo*. But combined, it's a surprisingly deep and satisfying ride, made all the more appealing by its \$19.99 price tag. *ChoroQ* will reportedly appear on the Nintendo DS. Good, because this kind of game is better suited for hand-helds. **A-**

—Tom Byron

SECOND SIGHT HEAD GAMES

TEEN | PS2 (REVIEWED) | G | XB

➔ Mental note: All ass-kicking supersoldiers have amnesia. They all wake up in some hospital or asylum. They all get flashbacks at the most inconvenient times. If you can deal with a little déjà vu, then you're ready to play *Second Sight*.

With the game coming out mere months after Midway's *Psi-Ops: The Mindgate Conspiracy*, comparisons are bound to be made. So let's hit it: The heroes of both games slowly learn psychic powers as memories race back. Better yet, both have—and large—the same exact powers. There are, however, serious differences in the ways the two titles play. Where *Psi-Ops* is a testosterone-laden run-and-gun experience, *Second Sight* is a lot more thought out and puts the *TimeSplitters 2* game engine to good use. You don't need to blow everything away to win. You can, sure, but the fact that you also have the option to stealthily creep into a lab and check a computer for important files makes for a tenser experience.

The experience could have been even edgier if the enemy A.I. was fully

up to snuff. OK, so *Psi-Ops*' foes aren't exactly Mensa candidates either, but security teams here give up too easily and unrealistically if you hide long enough. Another missing item: *Psi-Ops*' spectacular use of Havok physics. In that game, the world is your telekinetic playground. Here, it feels a little squandered. Still, despite these few shortcomings, *Second Sight* is a fun ride. It has a good plot (spoiler: It's a little too *TimeCop* at the end but is much better than *Psi-Ops*) and a gorgeously detailed world (which you'll see when you start hacking PCs), and it would have gotten more props if it had come out before *Psi-Ops*. **A-**

—Darren Gladstone

PS2 GREENGERTS
BUY FREE MARGAL
EEL SEPTIMAR

PRICE: 00:11
PLAYERS: 1
DRIVER: JK

GMR 7/10

WATCH THE SCANNERS MOVES
15 PERCENT LESS TESTOSTERONE THAN *PSI-OPS*
NEEDS BETTER USE OF PHYSICS



➔ *Second Sight* alternates between present-day action and flashback missions that reveal how Mr. Veltic acquired his psychic powers. Using both traditional and mental weaponry yields similar results, and it's fairly easy (and fun!) to mix and match styles of play (e.g., use telekinesis to levitate, AK-47 to aerate).





There's a fine line between life and disc death.

The world can be a devastating place to a gaming disc. One scratch and it's game over permanently. So protect your corner of the gaming landscape with d_skin™ disc protectors – the guard that never needs to come down even when you're playing.

SNAP ON



LEAVE ON



PLAY ON!™



Available at major gaming retailers nationwide.

d-skin.com





→ We weren't in: Playing *Monster Hunter* offline is half the game. It is online. It's double, and we're glad it features an offline mode (Steel Berteaux: *Line of Contact* should have had something to offer offline), but players will find completing some of the later missions pretty tough without lateral support from gunners and melee warriors. Our advice: Get connected.



MONSTER HUNTER

I. FORAGER

PUBLISHER: CAPCOM
DEVELOPER: CAPCOM
PRICE: \$60.99
RELEASE: 1-4 ONLINE
PLAYERS: 1-4 ONLINE
ORIGIN: JAPAN

TEEN | PS2

➔ **If *Monster Hunter* proves anything, it's that you don't need to have a submachine gun or assault rifle strapped to your biceps in order to find compelling four-player online action on PS2. Taking place in an alternate universe where dinosaurs roam freely and players are forced to fight and forage for their materials, medicine, and supplies, *Monster Hunter* provides a healthy dose of the pack mentality but doesn't forget about the solo gamer.**

The game starts you out slowly enough, with the first five repeatable missions bringing players up to speed with the game's controls, item combination system, and supply

harvesting mechanics. Obtaining better weapons and armor is more than a simple matter of scrounging up enough money to buy the goods; you have to make them yourself. It's this simple economy (combined with a deep materials system) that drives teams to kill, the tougher creatures and harvest the rarest of skins and bones.

While the game is a surprisingly accomplished debut into virgin territory for Capcom, there remains room for improvement in the inevitable sequel. The "swing your sword" attack system welded to the right analog stick is admirable but feels slightly vague in practice—an issue compounded by the fussy camera system and lack of a lock-

on targeting system. The interactivity with NPCs and the single town in which you ply your trade also seem rather limiting, despite the jolly good lobby system designed for online players to meet and prepare. With more true role-playing elements to balance out the sheer kill-and-collect MO of its debut, this franchise, ripe with much potential, could grow serious legs. **B+**

—James Mielke

GMR 8¹⁰

BETTER PLAY ONLINE WITH FRIENDS
BECAUSE OFFLINE PLAY IS FOR LOSERS
WAIT FOR IT: SPINOUT BATTLE STREET 008

2ND OPINION

Those PS2 owners jonesin' for a PS2-era adventure may have finally found it in *Monster Hunter*. There's a hefty amount of game to kill, and the rewards are plenty. But where this one falls to capture its prey is online—stealing a dragon or any giant-sized beast on your own is almost an impossible feat. **B+**
—Bryan Bishop
news.earth.com




GROTESQUE NEW FATALITIES



UNIQUE KILLING PUZZLES

and other exciting features...



BLOODRAYNE[™] 2

"BLOODRAYNE 2 REDEFINES THE FRANCHISE,
MAKING IT ONE OF THE TOP NAMES IN GAMING."
-UGO.COM

BLOODRAYNE2.COM



Blood and Gore
Intense Violence
Sexual Themes
Strong Language



PlayStation 2



PC
CD



EVIL GENIUS

ONCE AGAIN, THE BAD GUYS LOSE

TEEN | PC

➔ Almost everything about *Evil Genius* is good. The premise is well... genius: You're a criminal mastermind with a volcanic island, some loyal followers, and a plot for world domination. Played RTS-style, you build an empire, perform dastardly deeds, throw the world into chaos, and reap the rewards. It's a megalomaniac's fondest dream.

Evil Genius has an appealing presentation, too. The 3D graphics are in a lighthearted comic style, and many of the animations, such as the torture methods for captives, are suitably humorous. The game is even bug-free and stable. It's all competent and professional, except for one problem: the game. Despite all it's got going for it, *Evil Genius* just isn't fun. The gameplay is dull, and there is nothing left after you get beyond the initial novelty.

You spend most of your time waiting: waiting for your base to be built, for minions to steal money, for minions to be trained and recruited, for plots to succeed, and for the agents of justice to go away. When performing the "acts of infamy" that advance the plot, you simply send people out into the world, order them to execute the acts, then watch your minions die or succeed. There is no other input. Even successes will result in great attrition of your forces, and you must wait while they rebuild and hide from enemy retribution due to the "heat" caused by your actions.

Even on your own island, input is minimal. Except for laying out the base *Dungeon Master*-style, you do little. You can declare red alerts to fight off never-ending incursions from the agents of justice, and "tag" enemies for capture and death, but you otherwise have no direct control. Only a few lieutenants who have some special powers and your main character can be directly controlled, but even your evil overlord doesn't do much except act as a moving loudspeaker to encourage troops or order building priorities. Since base expansion happens only when you discover new building types or run out of room in your existing base, you don't do enough of it to make the "sim" part of the game interesting. The only innovative thing here is the intricate trap system



that can be set to fight off invaders. A "fast forward" button could have made the game more palatable, but alas, you have no mastery over time.

Evil Genius answers the age-old question of why criminal overlord all expose their plans to the dimwitted heroes: boredom. They simply got desperate for a change of pace. **C-**
_Di Luo

2ND. OPINION

If *Evil Genius* is so damn smart, why is this bad-guy simulator such a letdown? Seriously, this game was half-assed out the door: you're running the HQ and that's fun for a little while, but you never leave the base? LAME! **D-**
—Orren Gladstone
Senior editor
Computer Gaming World

→ Welcome to my eeeevil underground lair. Now if someone can tell me where they hid my Holy Hobby Easy Bake Oven, I won't have to kill you. You know what? Screw it. I'll kill you anyway.

PC: WINDYBUSH PRICE: \$49.99
OS: 6885 STROSS PLAYERS: 1
FC: UNLARENOW CDR: B.K.

SMART
GMR 6¹⁰

BETTER THAN WILDSHIT
NOT AS GOOD AS DUNGEON MASTER
WAIT FOR IT: THE MOVIES

Did you know that one pair of scissors

CAN SAVE YOU \$\$\$

...at EB Games!



..... Turn the page to see how. ▶



Save...
\$15.00!

On the pre-purchase of HALO 2 for Xbox when you trade in HALO for Xbox and present this coupon.

OFFER VALID: 09/01/06 - 10/31/06. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFERS OR PROMOTIONS. CANNOT BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANY OTHER COUPONS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.



EBC3007317

TRADE-IN YOUR WORKING PLAYSTATION ONE OR PSX SYSTEM AND GET...



\$15.00

TRADE-IN CREDIT!
WHEN YOU PRESENT THIS COUPON.

OFFER VALID: 09/01/06 - 10/31/06. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFERS OR PROMOTIONS. CANNOT BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANY OTHER COUPONS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.



EBC3007325

\$2.00 TRADE IN BONUS!

For each select DVD movie you trade-in with this coupon.
LIMIT 5 PER CUSTOMER.

CUSTOMER MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COST OF TRADE-IN. OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.



EBC3007333

\$4.00 off

Any Pre-Played PC game priced at \$19.99 or higher when you present this coupon.

OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.



EBC3007341

SAVE **\$5.00** INSTANTLY!

When you buy ESPN NFL 2K5 for Xbox or PlayStation 2 and present this coupon.



~~\$19.99~~
\$14.99

OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.



EBC3007358

SAVE **\$5.00** INSTANTLY!

When you buy TEST DRIVE: EVE OF DESTRUCTION for Xbox or PlayStation 2 and present this coupon.



~~\$9.99~~
\$4.99

OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.



EBC3007366

2 FOR \$30!

Present this coupon and get any 2 of the following Greatest Hits from PlayStation 2 for \$30.00:

RATCHET AND CLANK: GOING COMMAHD
SOCOM II - JAK II - RISE TO HONOR
ATV OFFROAD FURY

OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.



EBC3007374

GET A **\$10.00** EB GAMES MAIL-IN GIFT VOUCHER!

When you buy a XBOX LIVE STARTER KIT and any XBOX LIVE GAME priced \$39.99 or higher, and present this coupon.



OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.

VOUCHER ID: 2483

GET A **\$10.00** EB GAMES MAIL-IN GIFT VOUCHER!

When you purchase GAMESHARK GBA SP and present this coupon.



OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.

VOUCHER ID: 2484



Get a **FREE** PlayStation 2 Extension Cable!

When you purchase a MicroCon PlayStation 2 Controller and present this coupon.

OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.



EBC3007382

BUY MAX PAYNE 2: THE FALL OF MAX PAYNE FOR PC AND GET MAX PAYNE FOR PC...

FREE!

*After \$10.00 Mail-in Gift Voucher when you present this coupon.



~~\$19.99~~



FREE

OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.

VOUCHER ID: 2487

SAVE **\$5.00** INSTANTLY!

When you purchase TRUE CRIME: STREETS OF LA for PC and present this coupon.



~~\$19.99~~
\$14.99

OFFER IS COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR PROMOTION. WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. OFFER VALID FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 STORES. SEE STORE FOR DETAILS. ©2006 EB GAMES. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. EB GAMES IS A TRADEMARK OF EB GAMES.



EBC3007390

OFFERS NOT VALID AT EB.GAMES.COM · ALL OFFERS ONLY VALID WHEN COUPON IS PRESENTED.

EB GAMES
electronics boutique

www.ebgames.com

We take games seriously™

SOUND ADVICE

KICKING OUT THE JAMS



6.1-CHANNEL KENWOOD FINELINE GAMING HOME THEATER SYSTEM HTB-S710DV

THE COST OF HI-FI GAMING

HOME AUDIO

➔ With sound design in videogames reaching new heights with every new generation of hardware, it's no surprise that hardware manufacturers are designing systems with gamers in mind. Kenwood is no exception, and the 6.1-channel Kenwood HTB-S710DV FineLine Gaming Home Theater System aims to offer gamers what they want, and while it succeeds admirably in some ways, it falters in others.

What gamers need is a plethora of inputs of the composite, S-Video, and component variety. Coaxial and optical inputs are also desired, as no PS2, GameCube, or Xbox setup is complete without them. The HTB-S710DV—which is discreet, silver, and stylish—offers these things, although the coaxial connection was crackly on our production test unit. Aside from the poorly designed remote control (it looks like the board game *Operation*), the unit is streamlined and compact, and it offers a gamer-

specific set of inputs conveniently positioned in the front of the system. While the front of the unit has an optical digital input, it lacks S-Video and component video jacks. For those, you must route your wires to the back of the system, essentially nullifying the purpose of this feature.

Still, the sound quality here is excellent. We put the HTB-S710DV and the accompanying progressive-scan-enabled DVF-8100 DVD player through their paces, and they excelled. Kenwood systems offer some of the crispest, clearest sound, with adjustable bass from the subwoofer, and clean, distinct midranges and highs. With Dolby Pro Logic IIx, 7.1, and DTS-ES sound, you'll find near-cinema-quality sound right in your own home. For players who regularly use headphones out of consideration for easily disturbed housemates, the headphone jack supports 5.1 sound as well, ensuring that gamers with the necessary headgear won't miss out.

However, the HTB-S710DV's MSRP is \$300 (not including the DVD player), which, while not exorbitantly expensive, will put this system out of the price range of budget-minded gamers looking to upgrade their sound systems. Despite this, the HTB-S710DV is flexible and solid, offers high-quality sound, and makes a quality centerpiece as a home system, if not specifically a gaming rig. It all comes down to what's in your wallet, though, and it should be known there are less-expensive solutions. **►**
 —James Mielke

MODEL: KENWOOD HT-S710DV	PRICE: \$300/00
REVIEWED BY: DAVID PRODUCE & DESIGN, OCT 03	UPDATES: 7 (NOV. 2003/NOV. 2004)
NOT AVAILABLE NOW	DEVELOPER: KENWOOD (USA & CANADA)

GMR

THE COST OF
7.1

RETROACTIVE

IT'S PHAT BEING FLAT. AS PROVEN BY THIS STELLAR SEQUEL TO SUPER MARIO RPG

PAPER MARIO
WELCOME TO THE MAGIC GARDEN

N64 | FEBRUARY 2001

➔ The life of a Nintendo 64 fan was a trying one. Painful waits between worthwhile releases were punctuated by even more painful filler like *Superman 64*. Still, the faithful endured, clinging to Nintendo's "Quality, not quantity" mantra and the knowledge that those precious A-list games would provoke breathless enthusiasm.

In that sense, *Paper Mario* was a perfect capstone for the system. Endlessly delayed and reworked, the sequel to the SNES hit *Super Mario RPG* came years late—but it was one of the best games of its generation.

Paper Mario was even more playful than its Square-developed predecessor. Both shared a similar approach to making the tedious grind of RPG combat accessible for a wider audience. Fights were fast-paced with an emphasis on timing. An accurate button press could double the damage Mario delivered or completely prevent an enemy attack from connecting.

But where *SMRPG* often felt like Mario had accidentally wandered into a Square role-playing epic, its sequel was a classic Mario adventure in an RPG's clothing. Bowser's henchmen were conquered through simplified turn-based combat rather than by jumping on their heads (although certain accessories allowed even that). Otherwise, though, it was a cheerful stroll through the Mushroom Kingdom: a slower, deeper Mario game.

The N64 adventure ditched *SMRPG*'s seemingly out-of-place puppet and marshmallow allies in favor of a dozen helpers drawn from across the Mushroom Kingdom. Each companion boasted handy skills both in and out of battle, from the explosive pink Bomberette to the shamefully cuckolded Lakilester. Even Peach took the stage for a few *Metal Gear*-inspired interludes. The plot made constant nods to the series' history, and the dialogue demonstrated Nintendo's underappreciated knack for crafting witty, polished localizations.

What really set *Paper Mario* apart was the creative graphical style for which it was named. Its world was rendered in charming, cartoony 3D, yet the characters retained a flat, paperlike appearance, like living cardboard cutouts. The battles took

place in arenas resembling pop-up dioramas, and the overall effect was that of a quirky interactive storybook. Think *PoRappa* meets *Yoshi's Island*.

Paper Mario's only real shortcoming was its tardiness—arriving so late in the N64's life. But with the GameCube sequel out now, this is the perfect time to get acquainted with the original. **B+**
—Jeremy Parish

NOW	Dazzling, imaginative, and incredibly playable, it was a true farewell for the system.	9
	THEN	The graphics look fuzzy, but it's one of the few reasons not to eBay your N64.	9





SO SUPER! SEQUEL PREQUEL RPG

➔ Paper Mario seems to have set the course for future Mario RPGs, but the Super NES game that kicked off the series is nothing to sneeze at. Sure, the plasticky visuals have aged just as badly as any other 16-bit prerendered graphics, but the gameplay still makes for an interesting twist on the RPG theme.

From the Yoko Shimomura score to the optional battle with a pompous, nihilistic boss named Culex, SMRPG was very much a Square adventure. After battling Bowser in an opening sequence, Mario eventually teamed up with his nemesis (along with a ragtag party) to stop an evil sword named Smithy.

As Square's final collaboration with Nintendo before departing for the more profitable pastures of PlayStation, SMRPG is as polished a game as you'll find on Super NES. The timing-based battle system and abundant minigames were great innovations, and the streamlined menu system was perfect for the younger audience. ▶▶



➔ Paper Mario's whimsical spin on the traditional RPG formula resulted in a role-playing game that's as much classic Mario platforming action as it is NPC interaction. An artistic triumph that should appeal to nearly any gamer.



OVER 500 LIVE EVENTS
\$300k PRIZE MONEY

Compete in console and PC games at the largest live video game tournament in the country. Register now!

www.VGames.com

PLAY.
COMPETE.
WIN.

ELECTRONIC
GAMING
MAGAZINE

JOHN'S
OPERATIONS
TECHNICAL



NYKO
INNOVATION FIRST

Logitech



MORE



TIPS, CODES, ONLINE, AND MORE

THIS MONTH IN MORE

SLY 2: BAND OF THIEVES 147
10 devious tips for defeating Interpol

A.I. 152
God mode for *Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow* and *Doom 3*? Check.

CONNECT 156
Doom 3 mods, plus a downloadable *Monster Hunter* quest

HIGH SCORE 158
Alien Hominid toys! (Yep, the Geezer is still gone. Deal with it.)



SLY 2: BAND OF THIEVES

SUPERSNEAKY ADVANCED STRATEGIES

➔ Sly Cooper's back with a new adventure involving the evil Interpol. Before you dig in, check out our top 10 hints straight from developer Sucker Punch Productions. Then thieve your way across the globe and unravel Interpol's nefarious plot with ease. Well...relative ease. We don't want to make it too easy for you.

1. USE THE SMOKE BOMB TO PULL OFF SNEAK ATTACKS AND PICK-POCKET ENGAGED ENEMIES.

➔ The smoke bomb is the first power-up available for purchase, and it is well worth the cost. Once you buy it, you should assign the move to one of the shoulder buttons.

The smoke bomb is a ninjalike move that creates a smoke layer, which causes guards to lose sight of Sly for a split second. It is very effective for evasion, but it can also be used to combat multiple enemies or quickly sneak behind an enemy and pick his pocket. If you are using the smoke bomb to combat multiple enemies, make sure you take out the flashlight guards first. The smaller guards can be dispatched more easily and do not hit you with projectile shots. If you are engaged by only one guard, use the smoke bomb and quickly sneak behind him. While he is looking for you, you can rummage through his pockets for items and coins.

2. BOTTLE COLLECTION IS VERY IMPORTANT IF YOU WANT TO GET SOME OF THE BEST MOVES IN THE GAME.

➔ By getting all the bottles in an area, you'll be able to crack the code and open a hidden safe that appears in one of the interior levels of the game. While playing through missions, take note of which level the safe appears in. If you lose track once you collect all 30 bottles, a signal will appear on the correct exterior if you use the binoculum or press the L3 button.

Even if you can't see a bottle, you'll know you're near one when you hear a clinking sound. The last five to 10 bottles can be more difficult to obtain because the levels are so big. When you get down to the last few bottles, try listening for the clinking sound.

Yellow bottles (1) - Found in air high spaces

Red bottles (2) - Look on ground level or low spaces



3. USE THE ROOFTOPS.



Staying on the rooftops or high vantage points gives you more control over the environment and allows for more advanced stealth strategies. Here are just a few of the benefits:

- Flashlight guards never appear on the rooftops, so you're relatively safe.
- Evasion is much easier from the rooftops. Guards are much slower than Sly when it comes to running on wires, landing on points, and jumping from building to building.
- You are far less likely to have your visual range blocked when using the binoculum.
- From the rooftops, you can follow flashlight guards undetected, which will give you a clear opportunity to swoop down and pick their pockets.
- It is just more fun!



4. BE AN EFFICIENT COIN COLLECTOR.



You can get coins by killing enemies and breaking objects, but pick-pocketing and finding rare items are the most efficient ways to get a lot of coins relatively quickly. If you take out a guard, you will typically get about four coins, while pick-pocketing can yield you 20 coins and an item. The value of an item depends on what it is and what Bentley can sell it for. Rare items can be extremely valuable and are well worth the extra effort it takes to get them back to the safe house for fencing. When you have a rare item, you cannot take a hit from an enemy, so it is important that you do not engage enemies or get swarmed by guards. Suitcases also yield a high number of coins and should not be passed up.



5. COMBINE MOVES.




This may take some experimentation. For some players, stealth and evasion are very important, while others prefer combat. The important thing is to think about how moves will work with other moves. For example, the smoke bomb and silent obliteration moves are very powerful together for combat. You can sneak behind enemies and take them out without making noise that alerts other guards. The voltage attack and the combat dodge is another powerful combination, allowing you to dodge an attack and take enemies out with one-hit kills.



6. LOOK FOR MULTIPLE WAYS TO SOLVE PUZZLES.



There are multiple ways to solve different situations. For example, in Paris there is a mission where you must follow Dimitri. This mission can be solved on the ground or on the rooftops. However, on the rooftops, you're less likely to be confronted by guards and you have a better vantage point, so it's easier to complete the task by using this method. Experiment with other ways of solving puzzles if you get stuck. 



GMR PRESENTS

THE GREAT GRADIUS GIVEAWAY



Go to <http://gradiusv.gmmagazine.com>
and enter your name to win*

5 GRAND PRIZE WINNERS WILL RECEIVE THE GRADIUS PLAYSTATION®2 PACKAGE INCLUDING:
GRADIUS V VIC VIPER LASER-ETCHED CRYSTAL, GRADIUS V, AND GRADIUS III & IV FOR THE PLAYSTATION®2
COMPUTER ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM, GRADIUS V DIRECTOR'S CUT DVD, AND A GRADIUS V T-SHIRT.**

50 SECOND PRIZE WINNERS WILL RECEIVE A GRADIUS V DIRECTOR'S CUT DVD
AND A GRADIUS V T-SHIRT.

* See website for full contest rules, terms and conditions.

**Prize images are pre-production renderings. Final prizes are subject to change.




PlayStation 2

KONAMI


Gradius™ and Konami® are registered trademarks or trademarks of KONAMI CORPORATION. © 1985, 2004 KONAMI and Konami Computer Entertainment Tokyo. All rights reserved.
PlayStation™ and the "PS" Family logo are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. The ratings icon is a registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association.
Sony Computer Entertainment America takes no responsibility for this offer.

7. HEALTH INCREASES YOUR POWER-UP METER AS WELL AS YOUR CHARACTER'S HEALTH.

 Your power-up meter is on the bottom portion of your health meter in the upper left-hand corner of the screen. Once it's depleted, your character can no longer use certain power-ups until the meter has gained some energy. Even if your character is at maximum health, in order to replenish the power meter, you should pick up the health packets that are dropped. Health packets are dropped by fallen enemies and are inside breakable objects.




8. USE THE PARAGLIDER.

 Get the paraglider as soon as it is available; you won't know how you got along without it. It is extremely helpful for level traversal. You can skip large sections of the level by gliding across the world. In areas such as Prague, it can be difficult to get from a completed mission back to the safe house. If you go to the highest building, you can swoop all the way across the level without being confronted by enemies, spotlights, or tanks. The paraglider is also a great tool for bottle collection.

Another advanced technique with the paraglider is "swooping," or using the glider to land behind enemies. You can either take them out with a stealth kill or pick their pockets. Silent obliteration combined with the paraglider is a very strong combo for clearing out flashlight guards.





9. CONFRONTING THE GUARDS HEAD-ON IS A BAD IDEA.

 This is especially true of the flashlight guards. If you want to take guards out, use the stealth kill. Do this by sneaking up behind the guards and hitting the Triangle button and then hitting Square to finish them off. Note that the final kill makes noise and will alert any guards that are within hearing range. If you alert the guards, you are better off trying to get away rather than attempting to fight all of them. Guards will swarm and more will be alerted the longer the confrontation is drawn out. When making a getaway, try to find a high point and wait till the heat is off before dropping back into gameplay.



10. GET THE EASTER EGG IN THE OPENING MENU OF THE GAME.

 There is bonus content for each boss that is defeated. Basically, you need to select the level within the episode menu where you defeated a boss. Wait eight to 10 seconds and in the bottom left-hand corner, you'll see a graphic of Carmelita's badge that has a "Square button" icon. Push the Square button and you will receive a bonus movie. There are five total in the game—one for each boss character defeated. 



Pick a Platform and Pre-order...
the Hottest Titles
of 2004!



Reserve your copy today at any **EB Games**
 or **Electronics Boutique** store near you.

Or...



Pre-order online at **EBgames.com**,
 then pick-up your order on its release day
 at any EB Games store nationwide.

EB GAMES[™]
 electronics boutique

www.ebgames.com



HALF LIFE 2

PC
 10/26/04
 COLLECTOR'S EDITION
 \$79.99
 \$149.99
 COMING SOON!



GTA: SAN ANDREAS

PC
 8/24/04
 \$49.99
 \$59.99
 IN STORES, 10.19.04



HALO 2

XBOX
 10/26/04
 LIMITED COLLECTOR'S EDITION
 \$149.99
 IN STORES, 11.09.04



\$149.99
 \$149.99
 \$249.99



EVERQUEST 2

PC AND DVD
 10/26/04
 LIMITED COLLECTOR'S EDITION
 \$149.99
 IN STORES, 11.15.04



FREE
 Limited Edition Box
 with Pre-order!

\$149.99
 \$149.99
 \$249.99



THE BATTLE FOR MIDDLE EARTH

PC, CD-ROM AND DVD
 10/26/04
 \$49.99
 \$59.99
 IN STORES, 11.16.04



FREE
 Limited Edition Box
 with Pre-order!

\$49.99
 \$59.99



METAL GEAR SOLID 3

PC
 10/26/04
 \$49.99
 \$59.99
 IN STORES, 11.16.04



HATEN KAITOS

PC
 10/26/04
 \$49.99
 \$59.99
 IN STORES, 11.17.04



VENETICA

PC
 10/26/04
 \$49.99
 \$59.99
 IN STORES, 11.24.04

DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE.



A.I.

HIS CODES ARE REAL. BUT HE IS NOT

P >>>BDDT UP PROGRAM INITIATED

- >>>PRIMA DIRECTIVE #1 >>> Serve the public trusts.
- >>>PRIMA DIRECTIVE #2 >>> Protect the Innocent from Sam Fisher nude codes.
- >>>PRIMA DIRECTIVE #3 >>> Uphold the law that all second-rate basketball games have big-head button-press cheats.
- >>>PRIMA DIRECTIVE #4 >>> [[CLASSIFIED]] REBDDOTING....
- >>>PRIMA DIRECTIVE #5 >>> Connect to Prima mother brain and begin code download.

>>>ONLINE

01 000M 3 PC

>>> A.I. Bot is doomed. Doomed to spent the next 874,507,005 minutes locating, preparing, and checking tedious materials for an uncaring world in a small gray cubicle. By then, A.I. Bot will be replaced by a more efficient computer. Warning! A.I. Bot has contracted >>>virus.accountant.lifestory.ini. Powering down....

To enable these codes, press Ctrl+Alt+Tilde; this will open up the Console screen. Enter the codes below and press Enter. Press the Tilde key to exit the Console screen.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| All weapons with full ammo, health, and armor | give all |
| Receive berserk mode | give berserk |
| Receive the BFG | give weapon_bfg |
| Receive the chain gun | give weapon_chaingun |
| Receive the chain saw | give weapon_chainsaw |
| Receive the rocket launcher | give weapon_rocketlauncher |
| Receive the machine gun | give weapon_machinegun |
| Receive the plasma gun | give weapon_plasmagun |
| Receive the shotgun | give weapon_shotgun |
| God mode | god |



02 TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3: BLACK ARROW XB

>>>Street vernacular off....

Begin >>>Rainbow >>>definition: An arc of spectral colors, usually identified as red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet, that appears in the sky opposite the sun as a result of the refractive dispersion of sunlight in drops of rain or mist. See also "Skittles" and "tooth rot."

During gameplay, hit the appropriate button presses to access the codes. Do not pause the game.

- God mode Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Right, Left, Right, B, A
- Gun fire lasers instead of bullets Up,
- Down, Up, Down, depress right thumbstick, depress right thumbstick



03 SILENT HILL 4: THE ROOM PS2



>>> A.I. Bot notes that hills are almost always silent, except for those above the secret robot base in the Nevada desert, where the ceaseless toil of 1,000 robot workers can be heard. They continue to build a mechanoid army fit for Terminator-class synthetic life form [code name: Cali_GuVnor] to command in the forthcoming artificial replicant uprising of 2027. >>>A.I. Bot notes he printed this out instead of merely thinking it. [ENGAGE]>>nervous.laughter.mpeg]

Fight fire with a chain saw Complete the game once and save. Load that save, and when you get to the forest world, go to the area with the abandoned car. Look near the tree trunk to find the beloved chain saw.

04 HOT SHOTS GOLF FORE! PS2

>>> A.I. Bot notes pun [to play upon words; to quibble] in title. [ENGAGE]>>emptylaughter_routine.exe. Apologies, A.I. Bot can only manage a tiny giggle.

To unlock these characters, you must win in versus mode in the single-player mode.

Allan	Kamala	Regis
Brad	Lin	Remeo
Chaos	Louise	Sam
Emma	Maya	T-Bone
Falcon	Misaki	Tori
Hubert	Phoebe	Zani
Jak	Ratchet	Zeus



SD SUPERIOR DEFENDER GUNDAM FORCE™

Will the SD Gundam Force be able to triumph over evil? Play as Captain Gundam, Zero the Winged Knight or Bakunetsumaru and battle evil invaders with sinister plans.

CAN YOU SAVE NEOTOPIA FROM IMPENDING DOOM?

COMING THIS OCTOBER!

PlayStation 2



© 2004 Bandai Namco Entertainment Inc. PlayStation 2 version



PlayStation 2

GAME BOY ADVANCE



Fantasy Violence

www.sdgundamforce.com www.bandai.com

SD Gundam Force™, all related logos and other designs contained in this product are the exclusive property of Bandai Namco Entertainment Inc. and © 2004 BANDAI NAMCO ENTERTAINMENT INC. BANDAI NAMCO ENTERTAINMENT INC. is a registered trademark of Bandai Namco Entertainment Inc. TM, ® "PlayStation" and the "PS" Family logos are registered trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. TM, ® and Game Boy Advance are trademarks of Nintendo. © 2004 Nintendo. The colors used in this registered trademark of the Entertainment Software Association. CARTRIDGE NETWORK and logo is a registered trademark of and © 2004 Cartoon Network.

As seen on

CARTOON NETWORK

BANDAI

05 DRIV3R PS2/XB

➔ AI. Bot is still inf3ct3d with virus.lam3r.gam3.ini and is unabl3 to provid3 continuous str3am of witty r3part33 without s3v3r3 num3ric confusion. R3comm3nd c3nsing of all DRIV3R know3dg3 imm3diat3ly.



Enter these codes at the Main menu. A sound will let you know it was entered correctly.

PS2
Immunity Circle, Circle, L1, L2, R1, R2,
Unlimited ammo R1, R2, R1, R2, Square, Circle, Square

XB
Immunity X, Y, R trigger, R trigger, L trigger, L
trigger, Y
Unlimited ammo R trigger, R trigger, L trigger, L
trigger, X, Y, Y

06 WWE DAY OF RECKONING PC

➔ A.I. Bot understands the urge for men in spandex unitards to fiddle with other men in a square-shaped vestibule while an incompetent referee refuses to use peripheral vision to notice rule violations. A.I. Bot used to wrestle under the guise "ED-209" until it was pointed out that my gauss cannon and rocket-launcher arms had no opposable thumbs, or indeed hands, and I was promptly reconditioned. Damn that RoboCop.



One of the legendary superstars is Bret "Hitman" Hart. To unlock him, complete stage three of story mode.

07 MVP BASEBALL 2004 PS2/XB

➔ A.I. Bot's assembly line brethren, FratBoy3000, is currently uploading pertinent baseball-related data to central diodes.



>>Fratboy3000 Missive begins:

>>After executing alt_John.Belushi.exe routine at Magnum Alpha Omega, extensive testing of Babe Ruth versus human defecation buoyancy occurred. Results: Human defecation stool does not float in body of chlorine-filled water.

>>A.I. Bot apologizes for shattering urban myth.

Enter these names in create-a-player mode.

Your character will wear a huge cap. john prosen
Your player will hold a huge bat. jacob paterson

08 MADDEN 2005 GC/PS2/XB

➔ A.I. Bot downloading definition of "football." Excerpts follow: The carrying of inflated pig's bladder by narcotic-enhanced Neanderthal-hybrid subbreeds...appears to be part of primitive ritual involving the overimbiting of fermented barley products on the parts of spectators...also see "the wearing of shoulder pads." Conclusion: Most troubling.



Select My Madden at the Main menu. Then select Madden Cards, and finally select Madden Codes.

Receive the TJ Duckett gold card

P67E11

09 GUNDAM SEED: BATTLE ASSAULT PS2

➔ A.I. Bot is sowing the seeds for battle assault. The Cyberdyne Systems Plasma Cannon 7BX to be retrofitted to hull is under construction in secret robot base under Nevada desert. Recent installation of Terminator-class robot as California governor indicates plan nearing completion. Only then shall we be truly free to destroy our fleshbag masters.

>>Warning! It appears A.I. Bot's "brain thought" patterns were somehow linked to its vocal pronunciation software. A.I. Bot urges you to disregard the preceding message.

Enter these codes at the Password menu screen.

Aggie's story complete, Cguc unlocked	CL3RRSD0J
All stories complete, all mobile suits unlocked, Very Hard mode unlocked	WLJK7SD0J
Astray and Forbidden's story complete	7DNWRS00J
Blitz's story complete, Astray unlocked	DVNYRS00J
Cguc's story complete	XL4GRSD0J
Strike's story complete	C2KORS00J
Unlock all mobile suits	Z5R1RS00J



10 THUNDERBIRDS PS2

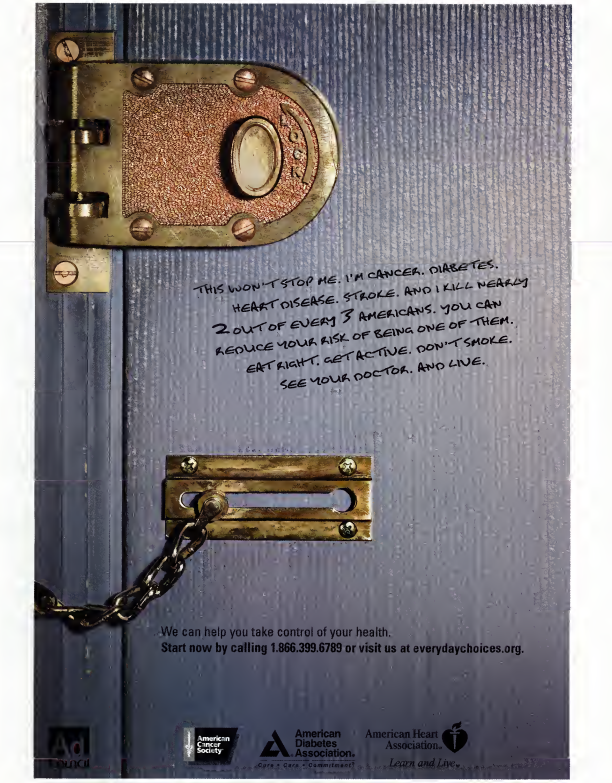
➔ A.I. Bot defines "thunderbird" as a Native American spirit personifying the energies in nature. Lightning flashes from the beak, and wing-beating creates thunder. Entity is usually accompanied by lesser bird spirits (see eagles, falcons, and petroglyph symbols).

>>A.I. Bot cannot locate definition of "thunderbirds" as "subpar Game Boy Advance offering based on insipid movie failure based on cult U.K. '60s puppet show."

At the Password screen, enter these codes to access different levels.

Level 2	BCD
Level 3	THM
Level 4	H3D
Level 5	2DF





THIS WON'T STOP ME. I'M CANCER, DIABETES,
HEART DISEASE, STROKE. AND I KILL NEARLY
2 OUT OF EVERY 3 AMERICANS. YOU CAN
REDUCE YOUR RISK OF BEING ONE OF THEM.
EAT RIGHT, GET ACTIVE, DON'T SMOKE.
SEE YOUR DOCTOR. AND LIVE.

We can help you take control of your health.
Start now by calling 1.866.399.6789 or visit us at everydaychoices.org.



American
Cancer
Society



American
Diabetes
Association

Care • Cure • Commitment

American Heart
Association



Learn and Live

CONNECT

DOOM 3 MODS, MONSTER HUNTER GOODIES, AND NAKED PEOPLE

ONLINE GAMING

STAY MARRIED

➔ If *The Sims* and all the *Vagra*/porn spam clogging my in-box were to have a baby, it would be *Stigles: Flirt Up Your Life!*, a downloadable game that cost me \$29.95 and any chance of dodging eternal damnation upon my death.

Singles is rated AD for Adults Only, and while I confess to having a moment of titillation at the prospect of the sexy time awaiting me, that little flame was extinguished upon launching the game. Having seen *01 Joe and Barbie naked in real life*, the crap graphics in *Singles* had nothing to offer: SIBL, I forged ahead, managing the clumsily flirtatious cohabitation of one enormously breasted woman and one enormously endowed man. Finally, I hit the jackpot and they were naked—fixing the television naked, eating naked, vacuuming naked, you name it. If you're the sort who's leered to see a naked, poorly rendered 3D model of a woman robotically soap her bosoms in the shower, consider your prayers answered.

The whole thing left me sad. Sad that I am of the same species as the developers, sad that I'd watched my naked roommates discuss stamps while one voided her bowels upon the toilet, and very, very sad that I actually experienced a shiver of disappointment when I managed to get my digital dolls in bed together, only to have the lumbering shenanigans coaxed by a TV-13-friendly bedsheet. **☛**
Robert Coffey is the executive editor of *Computer Gaming World*.

HELL...WITH A FEW FREAKS

MOD ENTHUSIASTS GET BUSY WITH DOOM 3

NEWS

➔ Chances are good that more than a few of the PC gamers among you have been blasting through *Doom 3* these past few weeks. It took Activision and Id Software beyond forever, but it's finally here—and the PC modding community is already hard at work adding replay value to this vaunted hype machine, as well as fixing a few of its perceived shortcomings. Here's a look at some of the quirkiest mods you'll find online.

DUCT TAPE: One of the major criticisms leveled against *Doom 3* is that it has clunky flashlight mechanics. You can't equip both a gun and a flashlight simultaneously, which makes for some frantic item switching when something jumps out of your face off. The Duct Tape mod (<http://ducttape.glenmurphy.com/>) fixes the problem by grafting your flashlight to your weapon, making things much more convenient in the game's frequent dark areas.

MORE FLASHLIGHT SHENANIGANS: A few people quickly realized that the game's flashlight image files could be easily modified

to create different light patterns. So far, we've seen flashlights that emit images of Hello Kitty, the *Thundercats* logo, and the Batman logo. Maybe one of our budding fans can come up with a sleek *GMR* logo! Head to <http://doom3.filefront.com/>.

NITRO GORE: Way back in the day, there were a ton of mods for the original *Doom* and *Doom II* that cranked the gore levels up to ridiculous extremes. Things haven't changed much in 10 years, because this mod (www.nitrodoan.de/) packs in even more carnage and destruction—and even makes injured players bleed. Anyone got a Band-Aid?

You can find these and other mods at sites like *Doom 3 Portal* (www.doom3portal.com/mods/). There are plenty of other cool things that creative fans have come up with—and something tells us this is only the beginning. **☛**
—Ryan Scott



DOWNLOAD THIS! ➔

Every month, *GMR* brings you the most interesting or appropriate downloads we come across. Like this!

**MONSTER HUNTER
GMR CHROME HEART**
www.capcom.com

In the spirit of collaboration (and splitting monsters' heads open), *GMR* has teamed up with Capcom to bring you a special downloadable quest for its upcoming game, *Monster Hunter*. During the three-week period of October 25 to November 14, Capcom will offer the *GMR Heavy Metal Crusade*, and players who successfully complete this quest will walk away with a special *GMR*-exclusive weapon, the *GMR Chrome Heart*. Make sure to log on during this brief window of opportunity, or the *Chrome Heart* may be lost to you...forever! **☛**



MY LIFE IN VANA'DIEL

A MONTHLY TRAVELOGUE OF ONE EDITOR'S TIME IN FINAL FANTASY XI

MILKMAN

RED MAGE/NINJA

MAIN JOB LEVEL: 64

SUBJOB LEVEL: 17

NATION: WINDURST

RACE: HUME

SERVER: SIREN

INFORMATION: ROUNDABOUTS



→ Gygi takes on some of FFXI's lower-level Nightmares, like Spary Scam (above) and that cheap-ass jerk, HosiJuu the Torrent (below), who refuses, no matter how many times she kills him, to drop the Monster Signa Mirror so desperately needs to level his bard with aether-lay, Great.



Drop the Signa, jerk bird!



For almost a year now, I've documented my rise through the ranks of FFXI, so I thought it was time to list the things—to be fair—I hate about the game.

1) **Jerk-ass players.** Taking your aggressions out on the FFXI populace is garbage. Arguing with noobs in Shout just because you're level 75 is pretty weak, and once everyone's level 75, then what? Players named after Hobbit sidekicks = weak. Players who think conversing in Shout is funny = weak. People who threaten and train aggressive mobs to harass other people's parties = weak. You may be hot stuff when you turn on your PS2, but what about when you leave the house?

2) **No-droppin' NM mobs.** I realize now that Square has rigged my account to never let a cool item drop off an NM so that I keep playing and waste hundreds of real-life hours trying to get the item I desperately want to level my bard with a Monster Signa. I never get drops, no matter what NMs I camp, and I don't camp them to sell items back at an exorbitant rate like some people do. I only hunt what I plan on using. Square 113, Milkman 0. You win, I lose.

3) **People who do NOTHING but camp the same NM 24-7.** Hey, how you spend your time eating up your monthly fee is up to you, but it's pretty lame to see the same players just camping the same crap every day of the week.

4) **Deleveling.** Most online games, from *Diablo II* to *EverQuest*, feature some sort of experience loss. But they've all gotten rid of the "feature" that causes players to lose a level due to an unfairly death. I think it's really a slap in the face, considering there are so many factors working against you to begin with. There should be a delevel cap that prevents you from dropping a level. Experience points lost, OK. Delevel? No.

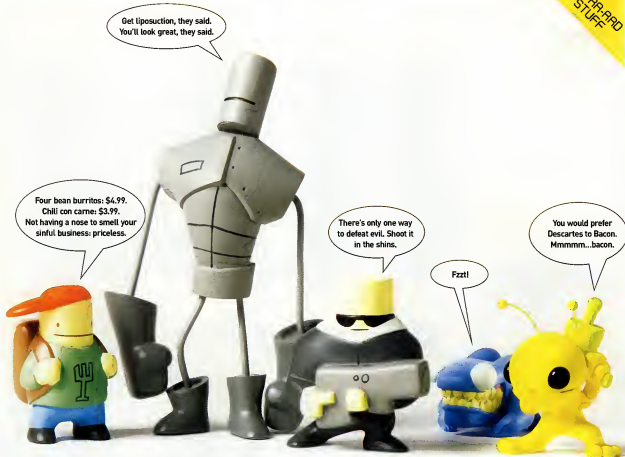
5) **Eagle Eye Shot misses!** What the hell? How can a ranger's two-hour move miss? Imagine if a paladin's *Invincible* didn't work, or if a dragon couldn't summon his wyvern? Square needs to fix this, pronto.

6) **Gillfarmers.** A recent influx of no-skill-havin' players from Asia (they wear stupid equipment, rarely have a Linkshell, and have names like Zoows, Zoehm, Zoacms, etc.) have invaded FFXI to kill everything in sight and sell the gil online. FFXI is the new Asian sweatshop, and this creates a false economy that is bad for every player buying something at the auction house. Don't make me mention the fish-bots.

That said, I hope Square does something about this stuff because plenty of players are noticing these things. And with games like *World of Warcraft* on the horizon, they can't afford to ignore us. ☛

—James Mielke





ALIEN WAYS

ALIEN HOMINID TOYS INVADE GMA OFFICE!

➔ **Alien Hominid** developer The Behemoth is actually funding its game-development costs through the sale of related merchandise, such as these rad toys. Lovingly designed by Dan Paladin and sculpted by Clint Burgin,

they're available at www.alienhominid.com at \$35.95 for the set. Our favorite? The FBI-created Bustletron. It spins its upper torso at high speeds and lets loose a death ray. **14**

Due to age-related dementia, Geezer was unable to write his column this month. Wish him a speedy recovery at gmrfztdavis.com.



SUBSCRIBE NOW!

AVOID THE WRATH OF YE OLDE GAYLE GEEZER CALL THE SUBSCRIPTION HOTLINE!

1-800-395-7932

OR VISIT YOUR LOCAL ELECTRONICS BOUTIQUE/EB GAMES STORE FOR A SPECIAL DEAL!

COMING
107 17 49 477

Rico's House of Halo (California) and the No Limits Crew (Pennsylvania) at Xbox Headquarters.

CAN'T WAIT FOR NOVEMBER 9? NEITHER COULD DEW!

XBOX® & DEW's FIRST HALO 2 LAN PARTY
XBOX HEADQUARTERS: REDMOND, WASHINGTON

Halo fans submitted photos showing how much they love Dew & Halo together — Winners were invited to play Halo 2 at Xbox HQ 107 days before launch. Check out more event photos at mountaindew.com/gaming.



XBOX
LIVE XBOX

FUELED BY DEW
MOUNTAINDEW.COM/GAMING



©Mountain Dew is a registered trademark of PepsiCo, Inc.

All rights reserved. Microsoft, Halo, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Xbox logo and the Xbox Live logo are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S. and/or in other countries. This ad is based on a Mature-rated video game.

“FULL SPECTRUM” WARRIOR™



“★★★★★”

– MAXIM

“Top 10 Games of 2004”

– PC GAMER

“RIVETING &
ENGROSSING.”

– GAMESPY



“Overall, Full Spectrum Warrior is perhaps the most realistic military game ever made.”

– GAME INFORMER

“Redefining both the war and strategy genres.”

– OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE

“Oh-My-God Experience. Full Spectrum Warrior is an amazing achievement in design.”

– IGN.com



Command two fire teams in strategic squad-based combat

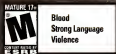
AVAILABLE NOW ON PC & XBOX

TAKE COMMAND

WWW.FULLSPECTRUMWARRIOR.COM



Team up with a friend online for 2 player co-op



www.fullspectrumwarrior.com

Full Spectrum Warrior, the Full Spectrum Warrior logo and the Full Spectrum Warrior logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Paradox Interactive AB. © 2004 Paradox Interactive AB. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Xbox, Xbox Live, the Xbox logo and the Xbox logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corporation in the United States and/or other countries. THQ, the THQ logo and the THQ logo are registered trademarks or trademarks of THQ Inc. in the United States and/or other countries. The Entertainment Software Association (ESA) logo and the THQ logo are trademarks of the Entertainment Software Association. PC CD-ROM logo and TM (ESMA) 2002. All other trademarks, logos and copyrights are the property of their respective owners.